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CHILDREN'S BOOK
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The Curious Girl.



“Away she threw the peg – up went the cover of the Basket – and whizz – out flew a beautiful White Pigeon. *Page 8.*

Published Nov: 1st 1803. by I. Harris corner of St Pauls Church Yard.

CUP OF SWEETS,

THAT CAN

NEVER CLOY:

OR,

DELIGHTFUL TALES

FOR

GOOD CHILDREN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF GODMOTHER'S TALES,
&c. &c.

FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON —

PRINTED FOR J. HARRIS, SUCCESSOR TO E. NEWBERY; AND
THE ORIGINAL JUVENILE LIBRARY, THE CORNER OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1810.



Method of Action

E. Hemsted, Printer, Great New-street, Gough-square.

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A

CUP OF SWEETS.

CURIOSITY.

ARABELLA fancied there could be no pleasure in the world equal to that of listening to conversations in which she had no concern, peeping into her mamma's drawers and boxes, and asking impertinent questions: If a parcel was brought to the house, she had no rest till she had found out what was in it; and if her papa rung the bell, she would never quit the room till the servant came up, that she might hear what he wanted.

She had been often desired to be less curious, and more attentive to her lessons ; to play with her doll and her baby-house, and not trouble herself with other people's affairs : but she never minded what was said to her, and when she was sitting by her mamma, with a book in her hand, instead of reading it, and endeavouring to improve herself, she was always looking round her, to observe what her brothers and sisters were doing, and to watch every one who went out or came into the room.

She desired extremely to have a writing-master, because she hoped, that, after she had learnt a short time, she should be able to read writing, and then she should have the pleasure of finding out who all the letters were for, which

the servant carried to the post-office ; and might sometimes peep over her papa's shoulder, and read those which he received. One day perceiving her mamma whisper to her brother William, and that they soon after left the room together, she immediately concluded there must be something going forward, some *secret* which was to be hid from her, and which, perhaps, if she lost the present moment, she never should be able to discover. Poor Arabella could sit still no longer ; she watched them from the window, and seeing that they went towards a gate in the garden, which opened into the wood, she determined to be there before them, and to hide herself in the bushes near the path, that she might overhear their conversation as they passed by. This

she soon accomplished, by taking a shorter way ; but it was not very long before she had reason to wish she had not been so prying ; for the gardener passing through the wood with an ill-natured cur which always followed him, seeing her move among the bushes, it began to bark violently, and in an instant jumped into her lap.

She was very much frightened, and, in trying to get away, without intending it, gave him a great blow on the head ; in return for which he bit her finger, and it was so very much hurt, and was so long before it was quite well again, that her friends hoped it would have cured her of being so curious : but they were much mistaken. Arabella's finger was no sooner well, than the pain she had suffered, her fright,

and the gardener's cur, were all forgotten; and whenever any thing happened, let the circumstance be ever so trifling, if she did not perfectly understand the whole matter, she could not rest or attend to any thing she had to do, till she had discovered the mystery; for she imagined *mysteries* and *secrets* in every thing she saw and heard, unless she had been informed of what was going to be done.

Some time after her adventure in the wood, she one morning missed her brother William, and not finding him at work in his little garden, began directly to imagine her mamma had sent him on some secret expedition; she resolved, however, on visiting the whole house, in the hope of finding him, before she made any inquiry, and

accordingly hunted every room and every closet, but to no purpose. From the house she went to the poultry-yard, and from thence to the lawn, but William was no where to be found. What should she do!—“I will hunt round the garden once more,” said she; “I must and will find him, and know where he has been all this time; why he went without telling me, and why I might not have been intrusted with the secret. I will not eat my dinner till I find him, even if he does not return till night.”

Arabella returned once more to the garden, where at length, in a retired corner which she had not thought of visiting, she found her brother sleeping under a large tree. He had a little covered basket by his side, and slept so

soundly, that he did not move when she came near the place, though she was talking to herself as she walked along, and not in a very low voice.

“Now,” thought the curious girl, “I have caught him: he must have been a long way, for he appears to be very warm and tired; and he has certainly got something in that basket which I am not to see, and I suppose mamma is to come here and take it from him, that I may know nothing of it. Mamma and William have always secrets, but I will discover this, however—I am determined I will.”

She then crept softly up to the basket, and stooped down to lift up the cover, afraid almost to breathe, lest she should be caught; and looking round to see if her mamma was coming, and then once

more at her brother, that she might be certain he was still asleep, gently she put her hand upon the basket, and, without the least noise, drew out a little wooden peg, which fastened down the cover. "Now," thought she, "Master William, I shall see what you have got here." Away she threw the peg, up went the cover of the basket, and whizz—out flew a beautiful white pigeon.

A violent scream from Arabella awoke William, who, seeing the basket open, the pigeon mounted into the air, and his sister's consternation, immediately guessed what had happened, and addressed her in the following manner :

" You see, my dear Arabella, the consequence of your curious and suspicious temper : I wished to make you a

present to-day, because it is your birth-day, but you will not allow your friends to procure you an agreeable surprise ; for nobody in the house can take a single step, or do the least thing, without your watching and following them. I know you have long wished to have a white pigeon, and I have walked two long miles in all this heat, to get one for you. I sat down here, that I might have time to contrive how I should get it into the house without your seeing it, because I did not wish to give you my present till after dinner, when papa and mamma will give you theirs ; and whilst I was endeavouring to think on some way to escape your prying eyes, I was so over-powered with fatigue and heat, that I fell fast asleep ; and I see you have taken that time to peep into my basket,

and save me any farther trouble. You have let my present fly away : I am sorry for it, my dear sister, but you have no one to blame but yourself ; and I must confess that I am not half so sorry for your loss, as I am for the fate which attends two poor little young ones which are left in the basket, and who, far from being able to take wing, and follow their mother, are not old enough even to feed themselves, and must soon perish for want of food."

William's words were but too true ; the poor things died the next morning, and Arabella passed the whole day in unavailing tears, regret, and sorrow.

THE

UNSETTLED BOY.

“ I do not think, at last, that I shall like to be a surgeon,” said Gustavus to his papa, as he trotted by his side on his little poney. “ Edward Somerville is to be a clergyman: and he has been telling me that he is to go to Oxford, and then he is to have a living, and will have a nice snug parsonage-house, and can keep a horse, and some dogs, and have a pretty garden; whilst I shall be moped up in a town, curing wounds, and mending broken bones—I shall not like it at all.”

“ It was your own choice,” answered his papa; “ but if you think you should like better to take orders, I am sure I have no objection.”

Three months after this conversation, Gustavus being invited to accompany some friends to see a review, he returned home with his little head so filled with military ideas, that he was certain, he said, nothing could be so delightful and so happy as the life of an officer; and that travelling about and seeing different places was better than all the snug parsonage-houses in England. But, not many months from that time, going with his papa to Portsmouth, to visit his elder brother, who belonged to the navy, he was so struck with the novelty of the scene (having never seen a man of war before), thought there was so

much bustle and gaiety in it, that it must be the pleasantest life in the world, and earnestly requested that he might be allowed to go to sea.

His papa now thought it time to represent to him the folly and imprudence of being so unsettled. "My dear boy," said he, taking him affectionately by the hand, "if you ~~continue~~ thus changing your mind every three months, you will never be any thing but an idle fellow, and your youth will be lost in preparations for different professions; or, should you remain long enough fixed to have entered into any line of life, you will not be long before you will desire to quit it for another, of which you will probably be entirely ignorant, and by that means ruin your fortune, and expose yourself to ridicule."

“ You make me recollect two boys I once knew, and whose story has often been the subject of conversation, in a winter’s evening, at the house of an old clergyman, from whom I received the first principles of the virtuous education my father had the goodness to bestow upon me.

“ Robin was the son of a farmer who lived in the village; his uncle kept a grocer’s shop in the next market town, and had a son named Richard. They were very clever boys, both understood the business they had been bred to extremely well, and, at the age of sixteen, were become very useful to their parents; but about that time they took it into their heads to grow tired of the employment they were engaged in, and to wish to change places with each

other ; Robin fancying that he should like extremely to be a grocer, and Richard, that nothing could possibly be so pleasant and agreeable as working in the fields.

“ The two fathers, who wished for nothing so much as the happiness of their children, were much grieved at this whim ; for they very well knew, that all they had been learning could be of no use to them, if they were now to change their situations, and would be exactly so much time and labour lost, and every thing was to begin again ; but Robin and Richard thought differently, and said they could not see that there was any thing to learn.

“ Their fathers desired they might change places for one month, and agreed that if in that time they saw no

reason why they should not remain, the one to learn the business of a farmer, and the other to serve in a grocer's shop, they would willingly consent to indulge them in their inclination ; and accordingly, on the day on which Richard was sent out to work in a large turnip field, Robin, decorated with a pair of white sleeves, and an apron before him, was placed behind his uncle's counter.

“ The first day he did nothing but grin and stare about him, dip his fingers in the jars of honey, and fill his pockets with currants, raisins, and figs, and he thought it pleasant enough ; but the moment he was set at work, he found himself so awkward, that, if he had not been ashamed, he would have begged to return immediately to his plough and

his spade. Notwithstanding his earnest endeavours, he could not by any means contrive to tie up a pound of rice, for when he had folded the paper at one end, and, as he thought, secured it, he let it run out at the other ; and something of the same kind happening to every thing he undertook, the shop was strewed from one end to the other with rice, tea, and sugar ; and his uncle told him he was only wasting his goods, and doing mischief, without being of the smallest use. If he was sent out with any parcels, he was sure to lose his way, and ramble about whole hours together, till somebody was sent in search of him. No one pitied him ; he was the jest of the whole family ; and, before half the month was expired, he begged in the

most earnest manner, that he might return to the farm.

“ Richard, who had never been much exposed either to heat or cold, desired his uncle would excuse his working till the cool of the evening ; but the farmer laughed at him, and asked him if he thought that would be the way to get his work done. He was therefore obliged to go out and attempt something, but his whole day’s work might have been done in a couple of hours by a country boy of twelve years of age, and would also have been much better done, for poor Richard did not know what he was about.

“ At five o’clock he said he must go and get his tea ; but his uncle told him they never drank any such slops, and promised him a good mess of porridge

for his supper, if he made haste to finish his work.

“ Richard *could not* work ; he had done nothing right, and the next day he found it worse and worse ; he did not know even how to handle a spade, much less how to make use of it. He sauntered about, with his arms across, the whole long summer’s day, doing nothing, yet tired and uncomfortable : he had nobody to speak to—he could not find one idle person ; even his aunt, when he went to seek her, was busy in her dairy, and told him to go and mind his business, and not lounge about and disturb those who were inclined to work.

“ Every creature he saw had some employment which they understood, and appeared to take pleasure in, whilst he, unable to do the same, and weary of

wandering alone, from the garden to the field, and from the field to the garden, wished a thousand times he had never quitted his father's shop, where, being able to act his part as well as other people, he felt himself of some consequence: now he was nobody, he was in every one's way, and all were tired of him.

“ Robin and Richard were glad to return to their own homes, and resume their former employments, in which they prospered so well, that they never after felt the least inclination to quit them, and are at this time living in ease and plenty, respected and esteemed by their friends and neighbours.”

CECILIA AND FANNY.

CECILIA went to spend a month with her aunt in the country. She was very much pleased at being in a place where she could run in the garden and in the fields as much as she liked, but she would have been much happier if her sister had been with her; and Fanny, who fancied she should have no pleasure in any thing without the company of her dear Cecilia, was tired of her absence, and longed for her return, before she had been two days gone.

They could both write tolerably well, and Cecilia, the week after her arrival at her aunt's, addressed the following letter to her sister:

“ MY DEAR FANNY,

“ I wish mamma could have parted with us both at the same time, that we might have rambled about together in my aunt's beautiful gardens, and in the fields and meadows which surround the house: but I believe I am wrong in forming such a wish, for she would then be left quite alone, and that I do not desire on any account; if I did, I should appear very selfish, and as if I thought of nobody's pleasure except my own, and that I should be extremely sorry for.

“ I am sure you will like to know

that I am very happy at my aunt's, and how good and kind she is to me. All the long border behind the summer-house is to be called our garden, and it is now putting in order for us; and when neither of us are here, my aunt says the gardener shall take care of it: it is full of beautiful rose-trees and flowering shrubs; and Thomas is planting many more, and sowing mignonette, and other seeds, so that when you come here, you will find it quite flourishing.

" My aunt sends me very often with Biddy to walk by the sea-side, and I have found a number of very pretty shells and sea-weeds, which I shall bring you, and a great many curiosities which I have picked up on the beach. I never saw such things before, and I am sure you never did. We never see

any thing where we live but houses and pavement—here I have seen the mowers and the haymakers, and I know how to make hay, and how butter is made, and many other things.

“ Good night, my dear Fanny ! Pray give my duty to dear mamma, and believe me,

“ Your most affectionate sister,

“ CECILIA.”

Fanny was delighted at receiving this letter, and wrote the following answer to her sister :

“ MY DEAR CECILIA,

“ How glad I am to hear that you are so happy in the country ! I should certainly like very much to be with you, but not to leave mamma

alone ; and she is so good, that I am not half so lonely as I thought I should be in your absence. Only think, my dear sister ! she has bought me the sweetest little goldfinch you ever saw, and it is so tame, that the moment I come near the cage, it jumps down from its perch to see what I have got for it.

" But this is not all : she has taken me to a shop, and bought me a great many pretty prints, which I am sure you will have great pleasure in looking at when you come home. We have been twice at M——— to spend the day ; and indeed, my dear Cecilia, I have had a great deal of pleasure, though perhaps not quite so much as you have had in your fields and meadows, and among your haymakers ; but mamma

says we may be happy in any place if we choose it, and will determine to make ourselves contented, instead of spending our time in wishing ourselves in other places than where we are: and I am sure she is very right, for if I were to fret and vex myself because I am not in the country, and you do the same because you are not in town, my goldfinch and my prints, my pleasant walks in the gardens at M——, and all mamma's kindness, would be lost upon me, and you would have no pleasure in your little garden, or in looking at the haymakers, your shells, your sea-weeds, or any of the curiosities you meet with.

" Pray, dear Cecilia, let me have one more letter from you before you come home, and do not burn mine, for I shall like to see how much better I

write next year ; and so will you, I dare say, so I shall lock up your letters in my little work-trunk.

“ Mamma desires her best love to you. Give my duty to my aunt, and believe me

“ Your affectionate sister,

“ FANNY.”

It was almost a fortnight before Fanny heard again from her sister, when one morning a basket, covered very closely, and a small parcel, with a letter tied upon it, were brought up stairs, and placed upon the table before her. The letter was from her sister, and contained the following words :

“ MY DEAR FANNY,

“ You would have heard from me much sooner, but I waited to write by George, whom my aunt told me she should be obliged to send to town on business. He brings you a basket of strawberries from her, with her love to you: fourteen of them are from *our* garden, and I assure you I had a pleasure in picking them, which I cannot describe: they are in a leaf by themselves, and I beg you will let me know if they are ripe and sweet, for I did not taste them; I was determined to send you all the first. I send you also a little parcel of shells and sea-weeds, and when I am with you, I will teach you how to make very pretty pictures of them, as my aunt has had the goodness to teach me.

" I have been very happy here, though I could not persuade myself to believe it possible when I first came, because I could not have mamma and you with me; but I shall remember her advice, and always endeavour to be pleased, and find amusement where I am, and with what I have, instead of fretting, like our cousin Emily, because she had not a blue work-bag instead of a pink one, or because see had an ivory tooth-pick-case given to her when she was wishing for a tortoise-shell one.

" My aunt says, that children who do so are so very tiresome, that they make themselves disliked by every body, and that they are never invited a second time to a house, because people are generally tired of their company on the first visit.

"I hope I shall see you and my dearest mamma next week; but you may write to me by George, for I shall be very much disappointed if he returns without a letter from you.—Adieu! dear Fanny.

"I am affectionately yours,
"CECILIA."

Fanny had only time to write a short note to her sister, which George called for soon after dinner; and Cecilia's return the following week, put an end to the correspondence for that time. The two sisters were extremely happy to meet, though they had not made themselves disagreeable, and teased people with their ill humour when they were separated; and they were very well convinced, that if they had done so, they

should have suffered by it, and have been very uncomfortable.

The following summer Fanny paid a visit to her aunt, and had the pleasure of finding their little garden in such good order, and so many strawberries in it, that she could send her sister a basket-full. She could work very neatly; and her aunt having given her a large parcel of silks, riband, twist, and gold cord, she made the prettiest pincushions that ever were seen, to send to her mamma, her sister, and her cousins.

Cecilia was extremely fond of drawing, and was so attentive to her lessons during her sister's absence, that she had a portfolio full of pretty things to shew her on her return.

No little girls in the world could be

happier than Cecilia and Fanny, and the reason of it is very plain: they were always obedient to their mamma's commands, kind to the servants, and obliging to every body; always contented with what they had, and in whatever place they happened to be; and never fretful and out of humour for want of something to do, for they had endeavoured to learn every thing when they had an opportunity of doing so, that they might never be at a loss for employment and amusement.

HENRY.

HENRY was the son of a merchant of Bristol : he was a very good-natured, obliging boy, and loved his papa and mamma, and his brothers and sisters, most affectionately ; but he had one very disagreeable fault, which was, that he did not like to be directed or advised ; but always appeared displeased when any body only hinted to him what he might, or what he ought not to do ; he fancied he knew right from wrong perfectly well, and that he did not require any one to direct him.

He was the most amiable boy in the world, if you would let him have his own way: he never heard any body say they wished for a thing, that he did not run to get it for them, if it was in his power; and no one could be more ready to lend his toys to his brothers and sisters, whenever they appeared to desire them: but the moment he was told not to stand so near the fire, or not to jump down two or three stairs at a time, not to climb upon the tables, or to take care he did not fall out of the window, he grew directly angry, and asked if they thought he did not know what he was about—said he was no longer a baby, and that he was certainly big enough to take care of himself.

His friends were extremely sorry to perceive this fault in his disposition, for

every body loved him, and wished to convince him, that, though he was not a baby, he was but a child ; and that if he would avoid getting into mischief, he must, for some years, submit to be directed by his papa and mamma, and, in their absence by some other person who knew better than he did : but he never minded their advice, till he had one day nearly lost his life by not attending to it.

A lady, who visited his mamma, and who was extremely fond of him, met him in the hall on new year's day, and gave him a seven shilling piece to purchase something to amuse himself.— Henry was delighted at having so much money ; but instead of informing his parents of the present he had received, and asking them to advise him how to

spend it, he determined to do as he liked with it, without consulting any body; and having long had a great desire to amuse himself with some gunpowder, he began to think (now he was so rich) whether it might not be possible to contrive to get some. He had been often told of the dreadful accidents which have happened by playing with this dangerous thing, but he fancied *he* could take care, *he* was old enough to amuse himself with it, without any risk of hurting himself; and meeting with a boy who was employed about the house by the servants, he offered to give him a shilling for his trouble, if he would get him what he desired; and as the boy cared very little for the danger to which he exposed Henry, of blowing himself up, so as

he got but the shilling, he was soon in possession of what he wished for.

A dreadful noise was, some time afterwards, heard in the nursery. The cries of children, and the screams of their maid, brought the whole family up stairs: but oh! what a shocking sight was presented to their view on opening the door! There lay Henry by the fireside, his face black, and smeared with blood; his hair burnt, and his eyes closed: one of his little sisters lay by him, nearly in the same deplorable condition; the others, some hurt, but all frightened almost to death, were got together in a corner, and the maid was fallen on the floor in a fit.

It was very long before either Henry or his sister could speak, and many months before they were quite restored

to health, and even then with the loss of one of poor Henry's eyes. He had been many weeks confined to his bed in a dark room, and it was during that time that he had reflected upon his past conduct : he now saw that he had been a very conceited, wrong-headed boy, and that children would avoid a great many accidents which happen to themselves, and the mischiefs they frequently lead others into, if they would listen to the advice of their elders, and not fancy they are capable of conducting themselves without being directed ; and he was so sorry for what he had done, and particularly for what he had made his dear little Emma suffer, that he never afterwards did the least thing without consulting his friends ; and whenever he was told not to do a thing, though

he had wished it ever so much, instead of being angry, as he used to be, he immediately gave up all desire of doing it, and never after that time got into any mischief.

MARIA;

OR,

THE LITTLE SLATTERN.

LITTLE Maria B——— was so slatternly, and so careless of her clothes, that she never was fit to appear before any body, without being first sent to her maid to be new dressed. If she came to breakfast quite nice and clean, before twelve o'clock you could scarcely perceive that her frock had ever been white: her face and hands were always dirty, her hair in disorder, and her shoes

trodden down at the heels, because she was continually kicking them off.

At dinner no one liked to sit near her, for she was sure to throw her meat into their laps, pull about their bread with her greasy fingers, and never failed to overset her drink upon the table-cloth.

One day her brother ran into the nursery in great haste, desiring she would go down with him immediately into the parlour, and telling her, that a gentleman had brought a large portfolio, full of beautiful prints of all kinds of birds and animals, which he was going to shew to them, if they were ready to come to him directly, for he could not stay with them, he said, more than half an hour.

Poor Maria was in no condition to shew herself; she had been washing her

doll's clothes (though her maid had desired her not to do it, and had promised to wash them for her, if she would have patience till the afternoon), and had thrown a large basin of water all over her; after which, wet as she was, she had been rummaging in a dirty closet, where she had no kind of business, and was, when her brother came into the nursery, covered with dust and cobwebs.

Susan was called in haste to new-dress her; but she was so extremely careless of her clothes, and tore them so much every day, that one person was scarcely sufficient to keep them in order for her. Not a frock was to be found, which had not the tucks ripped, and the strings broken, nor a pair of shoes fit to put on; her face and hands could not be

got clean without warm water, and that must be fetched from the kitchen ; then she had to look for a comb, Maria had poked hers into a mouse-hole, and had been rubbing the grate with her brush : in short, by the time all was ready, and she was dressed, a full hour had slipped away without her perceiving it.

Down stairs, however, she went, opened the parlour-door, and was just going to make a fine courtesy to the gentleman and his portfolio, when to her very great surprise and mortification, she perceived her mamma sitting alone, at work by the fire. The gentleman had shewn his prints to her brothers and sisters, made each of them a present of a very pretty one, and had been gone some time.

When her aunt came from Bath, she

brought her a nice green silk bonnet, and a cambric tippet, tied with green riband. Maria was very much delighted with it, and fancied she looked so well in it, that she could not be prevailed upon to pull it off; but she soon forgot that it was new and very pretty, and ought to be taken care of; she thought of nothing, when she could escape from her maid, but of getting into holes and corners; and having rambled into an old back kitchen, and finding herself too warm, she took off her pretty green bonnet, and threw it down on the ground, but recollecting something she had now an opportunity of doing, ran away in great haste, and left it there.

When she was asked what she had done with her bonnet, she said she did

not know, and the servants lost their time in seeking for it ; for who would have thought of looking for a young lady's bonnet in a dirty back kitchen ?

There, however, it was found, with a black cat and four kittens lying asleep in it, and so entirely spoiled, that it could never be worn any more ; and she was obliged to wear her old bonnet a great many months longer, for her mainma was extremely angry with her, and would not buy her a new one ; nor did she deserve to have one, till she could learn to take more care of it, and not leave it about in such dirty places.

It is not very usual to see young ladies wandering about by themselves in stables and outhouses, but Maria had very great pleasure in it, and never lost the opportunity when she could get away

without being seen ; and she was so dirty, and had so often her clothes torn, that she was frequently taken by strangers for some poor child sent on an errand to the servants.

One day, when she was passing through the gate to see who was coming down the lane, a little boy upon an ass, who came up from the sea-side every week with fish, seeing her there doing nothing, called out, “Here, hark ! you little girl, open the gate, I say—come, make haste, do not stand there like a post. What ! are you asleep ?”

Maria was so much ashamed, that she could not move, but hung down her head, and the boy (who had a mind to make her save him the trouble of getting off from his ass) continued to

talk to her in the polite manner in which he had begun : “ Why, you little dirty thing ! open the gate I say—if you do not, I will tell the cook of you, and she will tell Madam, and I shall get you turned out of the house.”

Thus was Maria B—— continually mortified by one person or another, and losing every pleasure and amusement which her brothers and sisters were indulged in, because she was never ready to join in them. They often went to walk in the charming woods and meadows which surrounded the house, and were sometimes sent with their maid to carry comfortable things to their poor sick neighbours, from whom they received in return a thousand thanks and prayers to God for their happiness ; but Maria could have

no share in either, for she was never with them, and they knew nothing of her.

Once, when their grandpapa sent his coach to fetch them to dine with him, Maria was not to be found ; and, after seeking her all over the house to no purpose, they at length caught her in the garden with a watering pot, which she could hardly lift from the ground, her shoes wet and covered with mould, her frock in the same condition, and her hands and arms dirty quite up to the elbows. Her mamma positively declared that the horses should not be kept a moment longer, the coachman was desired to drive on, and Maria was left to spend the day in the nursery from whence she was ordered not to stir:

There she spent a melancholy day

indeed, for she had no means of amusing herself to make time pass lightly on : she had no pleasure in reading, so that all the pretty books which had been bought for her were of no use ; she could not play with her doll, for it had no clothes, they were all lost or burnt ; and she had suffered a little puppy to play with her work-bag, till both that and the work which was in it, thread-case, cotton, and every thing else were all torn to pieces. The only thing she found to do, was to sit down by the window, look at the road and cry, till her brothers and sisters returned, and then she had the mortification of hearing them recount the pleasure they had enjoyed, talk of the curiosities their grandpapa had shewn them in the great closet at the end of the gallery, and of

50 MARIA ; OR, THE LITTLE SLATTERN.

seeing all the pretty things they had brought home with them, and of which she might have had her share if she had been of their party.

FREDERICK'S HOLIDAYS.

"I WISH," said Frederick to Mr. Petersen, "I could be with my aunt in town to spend the holidays; I shall be so tired here in the country, I shall not know what to do with myself. Two of my schoolfellows live in the next street to my aunt, and they will be going with their papa to the play, and to Astley's, and to walk in the Park, and will have so much more pleasure than I shall

have—why, I might as well be at school, as here sauntering about the fields."

" You are not very civil," answered Mr. Peterson. " When you came from Barbadoes last year, and had no other acquaintance, you liked very well to be with me in the holidays: however, if you desire it, my dear Frederick, you shall go to your aunt's, that you may be near your little friends, and I will write to their papa, to request that he will give you leave to be with them as much as possible, that you may partake of all their pleasures, for I do not think you will have a great deal in your aunt's house; you know she is always ill, and cannot have it in her power to procure you much amusement."

Frederick was accordingly sent to town, and his first wish was to pay a

visit to his two friends in the next street. His aunt's servant was ordered to conduct him to the house, and he was shewn immediately up stairs; but, instead of meeting with those he expected, he found their papa alone in the drawing-room, sitting at a table covered with papers, and apparently very busy:

On inquiring for his schoolfellows; he was very much surprised at being informed that they were gone into the country: "for," said their papa, "they would not have liked to be confined at home all their holidays, and I should have had no time to run about with them; they might as well have remained at school as have been here; but where they are gone they will enjoy themselves; they will spend a week at their grandfather's, and from thence go to

my good friend, Mr. Peterson's, where they will have all the pleasure and amusement they can possibly wish for."

Frederick was so vexed and disappointed that he could not open his lips, but made a low bow, and returned to his aunt, whom he found just risen to breakfast. She was quite crippled with rheumatism, and had so great a weakness in her eyes, that she could not bear the light, and would only allow one of the windows to have a little bit of the shutter open.

In this dismal room, without any thing to amuse himself with, was poor Frederick condemned to spend his holidays: his aunt made him read to her whenever she was awake, and it was only when she dropped asleep for half an hour in her easy chair, that he could

creep softly to the other end of the room, and peep with one eye into the street, through the little opening between the shutters.

Poor Frederick now sincerely repented having been so rude and ungrateful to Mr. Peterson, and wished a thousand times a day he had been contented to stay at his house; he would have been very happy to have had it in his power to return, but dared not propose it to his aunt, and would also have been ashamed to appear before Mr. Peterson.

After many melancholy days, and tedious evenings, spent in lonely solitude, he at length saw the happy morning which was to end his captivity. "What a foolish boy I have been!" thought he, as he was putting his things

together. "The day of my return to school is my first holiday, and the preparations I am making for it the only pleasure I have felt since I left it. In the country, where I might have enjoyed the liberty of running in the fields in the open air, I was discontented and restless; and I left it, to shut myself up in a sick room. I am now going back to school, to have the pleasure of hearing how agreeably all my schoolfellows have been spending their time, whilst I shall have nothing to recount to them, but how many phials were ranged on my aunt's chimney-piece, and how many hackney-coaches I could see with one eye pass through the street."

Frederick was very right; he found his two little friends just arrived, and who, for a whole week, could speak of

nothing but the pleasure they had enjoyed at Mr. Peterson's. They told him of their having been several times on the river on fishing-parties, of two nice little ponies which had been procured for them, that they might ride about in the shady lanes, and round the park, and of the beautiful houses and gardens they had been taken to see in the neighbourhood.

They had a great many very pretty presents, which they shewed to Frederick, and which they had received from their friends, who had been pleased with their behaviour, and had desired they might be allowed to pay them a visit at the next vacation.

Frederick could never forget how much he had lost by his folly; he knew he had been wrong, and, as he

was not a bad boy, he was not ashamed to acknowledge it, but wrote a very pretty letter to Mr. Peterson, begging him to forgive the rudeness he had been guilty of, and telling him how much he had suffered by it; assuring him that he would never again desire to quit his house to go to any other, and saying, that he never should have done it, if he had not been a foolish restless boy; that he had been severely punished for his fault, and hoped he would think it enough, and grant him his pardon as soon as possible.

Mr. Peterson readily complied with his request, and invited him, the next time he left school, to accompany his two little friends to his house, where they spent a month in the midst of pleasure and amusement; sometimes riding the

ponies to the top of a hill, from whence they could see the hounds followed by the huntsman, and several gentlemen on horseback; at other times assisting their good friend to entertain his tenants with their wives and children round a Christmas fire in the great hall: in short, Frederick was so happy, that he never once thought of Astley, the Park, or the play, or had any desire to quit Mr. Peterson in search of other amusements.

THE

LITTLE QUARRELLERS.

MARGARET and Frances lived with their papa and mamma in a pretty white house on the side of a hill ; they had a very large garden which led into a meadow, at the bottom of which ran a beautiful river.

Every body thought them the happiest children in the world, and certainly they might have been so, if their dispositions had been more amiable ; for

their papa and mamma were very fond of them, and indulged them in every thing proper for their age, and their friends were continually bringing them presents of toys and dolls, or some pretty thing or other.

They had each a little garden of their own, full of sweet flowers and shrubs, currants, gooseberries, and strawberries. Margaret had a squirrel, in which she took great delight, for it would jump joyfully about its cage whenever she came near it, and would eat nuts and biscuit out of her hand ; and Frances had a beautiful canary-bird in a nice gilt cage, which awoke her every morning with a song, and told her it was time to rise. Margaret's nurse had brought her a white hen with eight little chickens,

and Frances had the prettiest bantams that ever were seen.

Their mamma sent them to walk with their maid every evening, either over the hill where the sheep and cows were feeding, or along the side of the clear river, to pick up pebbles, to hear the merry songs of the fishermen, and see the boats pass with the market-people, going to the town with their fruit and their vegetables. Sometimes their papa took them in his pleasure-boat across the river, to eat strawberries and cream at a farm-house; and sometimes they were permitted to accompany their mamma when she went to dine with her friends in the neighbourhood.

It is scarcely to be believed, that two children who might have lived so hap-

pily, should have found their greatest pleasure in tormenting each other ; and though, before their parents and strangers, they appeared to be all sweetness and good-humour, that they should have been continually contriving how to vex and tease each other. The moment they were alone, they did nothing but fight and quarrel, and dispute about trifles.

Not contented with this, whenever they were displeased, they did not care what mischief they did, but tried, by every means in their power, to vex each other, by spoiling and destroying every thing which came in their way. Margaret was quite delighted when she had been running over all Frances's garden, and treading down every thing which was growing in it ; and Frances, to be

revenged on her sister, never failed to go directly and pull up all her flowers by the roots, throw stones at her little chickens, and tear her doll's clothes to pieces.

One day when they had had a great quarrel about some foolish thing not worth mentioning, Margaret was so extremely angry, that she got her mamma's ink-stand, and threw the ink all over her sister's work, and then walked out of the room, leaving it on the table. Frances, who was gone to ask her mamma for some thread, no sooner returned to the parlour, and found her work in so sad a condition, but guessing immediately how it came so, instead of seeking for her sister, and telling her in a gentle manner how wrong she had acted, and begging that all their quar-

rels might be ended, and that they might live together as sisters should do, and endeavour to make each other happy, instead of spending their time in vexing and teasing each other—instead of doing this, the malicious girl thought of nothing but how she might be revenged ; and watching for a favourable opportunity, she seized on a fine damask napkin which had been given to Margaret to hem and mark, threw it down on the hearth, contriving to let one end of it lie over the fender, and then began to poke the fire as violently as she could, hoping some of the cinders would fall upon it, and burn a few holes in it. Her wish was soon accomplished, and even beyond what she desired, for the napkin was in an instant in a blaze, and the house in

danger of being burnt to the ground. Terrified almost to death, she began to scream for help, and the whole family were immediately assembled in the parlour ; Margaret among the rest, with the bottom of her frock covered with ink, though she had not perceived it, and which too plainly shewed who had done the first mischievous exploit.

They were now both strictly examined, and their tricks soon discovered : their papa and mamma watched them very narrowly, and found that they were quite different when alone, to what they appeared when in their presence ; and they no longer treated them with the kindness and indulgence they had hitherto done. Their gardens were taken from them, the squirrel and the canary-bird given away, and the white

hen, with her little brood of chickens, sent back to the nurse : they were deprived of all their amusements, and they had lost the good opinion of their parents and friends, for the servants had told their story to every body they met with, and they were never mentioned without being called the Sly Girls, or the Little Quarrellers.

THE
VAIN GIRL.

CAROLINE was trifling away her time in the garden with a little favourite spaniel, her constant companion, when she was sent for to her music-master ; and the servant had called her no less than three different times before she thought proper to go into the house.

When the lesson was finished, and the master gone, she turned to her mamma, and asked her, in a fretful and impatient tone of voice, how much

longer she was to be plagued with masters—said she had had them a very long time, and that she really thought she now knew quite enough of everything.

“ That you have had them a very long while,” answered her mamma, “ I perfectly agree with you ; but that you have profited so much by their instruction, as you seem to imagine, I am not so certain. I must, however, acquaint you, my dear Caroline, that you will not be *plagued* with them much longer, for your papa says he has expended such large sums upon your education, that he is quite vexed and angry with himself for having done so, because he finds it impossible to be at an equal expense for your two little sisters ; I would therefore advise you,

whilst he is so good as to allow you to continue your lessons, to make the most of your time, that it may not be said you have been learning so long to no purpose."

Caroline appeared quite astonished at her mamma's manner of speaking, assured her she knew every thing perfectly, and said, that if her papa wished to save the expense of masters for her sisters, *she would* undertake to make them quite as accomplished as she herself was.

Some time after this conversation, she accompanied her mamma on a visit to a particular friend who resided in the country ; and as there were several gentlemen and ladies at the same time in the house, Caroline was extremely happy in the opportunity she thought

it would give her of surprising so large a party by her drawing, music, &c; and she was not very long before she gave them so many samples of her vanity and self-conceit, as rendered her quite ridiculous and disgusting.

She was never in the least ashamed to contradict those who were older and better instructed than herself, and would sit down to the piano with the utmost unconcern, and attempt to play a sonata which she had never seen before, though at the same time she could not get through a little simple song, which she had been three months learning, without blundering half a dozen times.

There lived, at about the distance of a mile from Mrs. Melvin's house, a widow lady, with her daughter, a charming little girl of thirteen years of

age, on whose education (so very limited was her fortune) she had never had it in her power to be at the smallest expense: indeed, her income was so narrow, that, without the strictest economy in every respect, she could not have made it suffice to procure them the necessaries of life; and was obliged to content herself with the little instruction she could give to her child, and with encouraging her as much as possible to exert herself, and endeavour to supply, by attention and perseverance, the want of a more able instructor, and to surmount the obstacles she would have to meet with.

When Caroline heard this talked of, she concluded immediately that Laura must be a poor little ignorant thing, whom she should astonish by a display

of her accomplishments, and enjoyed in idea the wonder she would shew, when she beheld her beautiful drawings, heard her touch the keys of the piano, and speak French and Italian as well as her own language; which she wished to persuade herself was the case, though she knew no more of either than she did of all the other things of which she was so vain and conceited.

She told Mrs. Melvin that she really pitied extremely the situation of the poor unfortunate Laura, and wished, whilst she was so near, she could have an opportunity of seeing her frequently, as she might give her some instruction which would be of service to her. Mrs. Melvin was extremely disgusted with the vanity of her friend's daughter, and wishing to give her a severe mortifica-

tion, which she thought would be of more use to her than any lesson she had ever received, told her she should pay a visit the next morning.

The weather was extremely fine, and the whole company set forward immediately after breakfast, and were soon in sight of a very neat but small house, which they were informed belonged to the mother of Laura. A little white gate opened into a garden in the front of it, which was so neat, and laid out with so much taste, that they all stopped to admire it, for the flowers and shrubs were tied up with the utmost nicety, and not a weed was to be seen in any part of it.

"This is Laura's care," said Mrs. Melvin; "her mamma cannot afford to pay a gardener, but hires a labourer

now and then to turn up the ground, and, with the help of their maid, she keeps this little flower garden in the order in which you see it ; for by having inquired of those who understand it (instead of fancying herself perfect in all things), she has gained so much information, that she is become a complete florist."

They were shewn into a very neat parlour, which was ornamented with a number of drawings. "Here," says Mrs. Melvin, "you may again see the fruits of Laura's industry and perseverance ; she has had no instruction, except the little her mamma could give her, but she was determined to succeed, and has done so, as you may perceive ; for these drawings are executed with as much taste and judgment as could possi-

bly be expected of so young a person, even if she had had the advantage of having a master to instruct her. The fringe on the window curtains is entirely of her making, and the pretty border and landscape on that fire-screen is of her cutting."

Caroline began to fear she should not shine quite so much as she had expected to do, and was extremely mortified when Laura came into the room, and was desired to sit down to the piano, at hearing her play and sing two or three pretty little songs, so well and so sweetly, that every one present was delighted with her.

She scarcely ever dared, after this visit, to boast of her knowledge; and if she did, Mrs. Melvin, who was her real friend, and wished to cure her of

her vanity, never failed to remind her of the little she knew, notwithstanding all the money which had been expended upon her education, in comparison to Laura, who had never cost her mamma a single shilling.

THE

YOUNG GARDENERS.

CHARLES, William, and Henry, had a large piece of ground given to them to make a garden of. Their papa gave them leave to apply to the gardener for instruction as often as they pleased, but not to expect any assistance from him or any other person: they were to put it in order, and keep it so by their own labour.

"I know," said Charles to William,

" that we shall never agree with Henry ; he is such an odd boy, that I really believe when once the garden is put in order, he will be contented to walk about and look at it, without ever touching any thing, for he is always quarrelling with us because we have no patience, as he calls it."—"Yes," replied William, " it is very true. Do you remember how angry he was when his bantam hen was hatching her chickens, and we helped to pull them out of the eggs ! Who would have thought we should have killed any of them ! I am sure I did not ; but they were so long, I could not bear to sit there all day waiting for them. I think, Charles, we had better give him his share of the ground, and let him do as he will with it, and you and I will make a pretty garden of

the rest, and manage it as we think proper."

This being settled, and the ground fairly divided, they all three went to work with the utmost alacrity. They rose with the lark in the morning, turning up the earth, and clearing it of stones and rubbish ; but Henry by himself had got his garden laid out in beds and borders, ready for planting, before Charles and William together had half done theirs : they could not determine how to do it ; the borders were too narrow, and must be made broader ; this bed must be longer, and that shorter ; so that what they did in the morning, they undid in the evening, and their piece of ground lay in confusion and disorder, long after Henry had planted his borders with strawberries,

and his beds were sown with annuals, and filled with pretty flowers and bulbous roots.

Charles and William had at length got their garden laid out in tolerable order, and, in other hands, it might soon have been in a very flourishing state; for their papa had given them leave to remove several pretty shrubs from his into their garden, and consequently it already wore a pleasant appearance. Two days had, however, scarcely elapsed, before these whimsical boys were tired of the manner in which their trees, &c. were planted, and longed to remove them.

“ This little cherry-tree,” said William, “ will surely look better at the corner of the wall.”

“ That it will,” answered Charles,

“ and will grow better there, I dare say ; and the rose-trees, do observe how ill they appear at the end of that border— who would ever have thought of planting rose-trees in such a place ?”

“ Nobody,” said Charles, “ and we had better change them directly, or it will be supposed we know nothing of gardening, and we shall be laughed at for pretending to it.”

No sooner said than done ; the plants and flowers were removed, and, in about a week from that day, were all put back into their former places.

When their seeds were just beginning to appear above the ground, they fancied that bed would do better for something else, and in less than five minutes the spade was brought, the bed turned up, and all the little flowers, which were

springing up so strong and promising, were destroyed without pity.

What a different appearance did the two gardens make in the month of June ! Charles and William saw, with sorrow and regret, that theirs was nothing more than a piece of waste ground ; they had removed their trees and shrubs so often, that they had all perished ; and not having patience to let their seeds come up and grow into blossom, their beds had nothing in them.

Henry's garden was beautiful ; there was not the smallest bit of it but had some pretty flower or fruit-tree growing in it : every part was blooming and sweet ; and his two brothers discovered, when too late, that without perseverance and steadiness, nothing can be accomplished, and that unless they came to a

determination to follow the good example their brother Henry set before them on this occasion, as on all others, their minds would, like their garden, be uncultivated and waste.

THE

WHIMSICAL CHILD.

Mr. and Mrs. Clermont invited their little niece, Elizabeth Sinclair, to spend a month with them in the country. Mr. Clermont was extremely fond of children, but his partiality to their company never extended to any who had been improperly and foolishly indulged, and were whimsical and discontented ; and had he known that his sister had suffered her little girl to have those disagreeable qualities, he never would have asked her to his house ; but he had

been two years abroad, and knew nothing of her.

The day on which she was expected, her uncle and aunt went to meet her, and were very much pleased with her appearance, as well as the affectionate manner in which she returned the caresses they bestowed upon her. She was extremely pretty, had fine teeth, fine hair, and a beautiful complexion ; and Mr. Clermont said to his wife, “ I shall be delighted to have this sweet little creature with me, and to shew all my friends what a charming niece I have.” But he was not long in changing his opinion, and very soon discovered that her beauty, much as he had thought of it, did not prevent her being the most disagreeable girl he had ever met with.

She was no sooner in the house than she complained of being too warm, then too cold, and a minute after, too warm again—too tired to sit up, yet not choosing to go to bed—wishing for some tea, and then not liking any thing but milk and water—now drinking it without sugar, then desiring to have some, and, after saying she never supped, bursting into tears because she was going to be sent to bed without supper.

“I perceive I was mistaken,” said Mr. Clermont; this *sweet little creature* will be a pretty torment to us, if we permit her to have her own way; but I shall put a stop to it immediately.”

Accordingly, the next day at dinner, he asked her if she would be helped to some mutton, but she refused it, saying she never could eat any thing roasted.

"Then, my dear," replied Mr. Clermont, "here is a boiled potatoe for you; eat that, for you will have nothing else."

Elizabeth was extremely disconcerted, and thought, if she had been at home, her mamma would have ordered half a dozen different things for her, rather than suffer her to eat any thing she disliked, or to dine upon potatoes. She made a very bad dinner, and was cross and out of humour the whole evening.

The next day at table Mr. Clermont offered to help her to some boiled lamb; but Elizabeth, according to her usual custom of never liking what was offered to her, said she could not eat lamb when it was boiled. "So I expected," said Mr. Clermont, "and (taking off the cover from a small dish which was

placed next to him) here are some *roasted* potatoes, which I have provided on purpose, fearing you might not happen to like the rest of the dinner."

Elizabeth began to cry bitterly, but her uncle paid no kind of attention to her tears, only saying, that if she preferred a basin of water-gruel, she should have some made in an instant. She was extremely hungry (having quarrelled with her breakfast, and had nothing since), and perceiving that her tears were not likely to produce any good effect, was glad to dine very heartily on lamb and spinage, and to eat some currant tart, which she had said she could not bear even the smell of. She insisted, however, on returning to her mamma immediately, saying she would not stay any longer in a

house where she was in danger of being starved, and was sure her mamma would be very hangry if she knew how she was treated.

“ I am sorry to inform you, my dear niece,” said Mr. Clermont, “ that you must endeavour to put up with it at least a month or six weeks, for your mamma is gone into Wales on business of consequence, and will not be at home to receive you till that time is expired.”

This was sad news for Elizabeth ; she was extremely unhappy, and wished a thousand times she had never quitted her own home, where she was indulged in all her whims, and where every one’s time was employed in trying to please and amuse her ; “ And now,” thought she, “ on the contrary, I never have any

thing I like, and my uncle appears to take pleasure in teasing and vexing me from morning to night." Finding, however, that she must either eat what was provided for her, or suffer hunger, and conscious that she had no *real* dislike to any thing in particular, though she had a great pleasure in plaguing every body about her, she thought it advisable to submit, and consequently dined extremely well every day, whether the meat was roasted or boiled, stewed or fried.

One day, when she was going with her uncle and aunt to take a walk to the next village, a poor miserable woman, with a child in her arms, and followed by two others, met them at the gate, and begged, for God's sake, they would take pity upon her and her

helpless infants, who she said had not tasted food since the foregoing day.

Cold meat and bread being immediately brought out to them, both the woman and her children seized upon it with so much eagerness, that they might really be believed to be almost famished.

Mr. Clermont desired Elizabeth would observe them attentively, and, after making her take particular notice of the joy with which the poor people were feasting on the scraps that came from their table, asked her if she thought she ever again could, without being guilty of a dreadful sin, despise, as she frequently had done, and refuse to eat of the wholesome and plentiful food which, through the great goodness of God, her friends were enabled to provide for her:

Elizabeth was struck with her uncle's words, and with the sight before her; she felt that she had, by her ingratitude and unthankfulness to God, rendered herself very undeserving of the comforts he had bestowed upon her, and of which the poor children she was then looking at stood so much in need ; and she never, from that day, was heard to find fault with any thing, but prayed that she might in future deserve a continuance of such blessings.

EDWARD AND CHARLES.

Mr. Spencer sent for his two sons, Edward and Charles, into his closet; he took each of them by the hand, and drawing them affectionately towards him, told them he was going to undertake a long journey, that he hoped they would be very good boys during his absence, obedient and dutiful to their mamma, and never vex or tease her, but do every thing she wished them to do; he also desired them to be kind to poor Ben, and to recollect, that,

though his face was black, he was a very good boy, and that God would love him, whilst he continued to behave well, just as much as if his skin were as white as theirs, and much more than he would either of them, unless they were equally deserving of his love, as black Ben had rendered himself by his good-natured and amiable disposition.

Edward and Charles both promised their papa that they would do every thing he desired, but they were not *both* equally sincere : Edward could with difficulty hide his joy, when his papa told him he was going from home, for he was a very naughty boy, and had no inclination to obey any body, but to be his own master, and do as he liked, to

get into all kinds of mischief, and kick and cuff poor Ben whenever he pleased.

Thinking, however, it would be proper to appear sorry for what he was, in reality, extremely glad of, and seeing poor Charles take out his handkerchief to wipe away his tears, when he was taking leave of his papa, he pulled out his also ; but it was not to wipe his eyes, but to hide his smiles, for he was so happy at the thought of all the tricks he could play, without having any one to control him, that he was afraid his joy would be perceived, and his hypocrisy detected.

Mrs. Spencer's health was so indifferent, that she seldom quitted her apartment, so that she knew very little of the behaviour of her sons. Edward,

as soon as he had breakfasted, usually took his hat, and went out without telling any one where he was going, or when he should return.

One day, when he was gone away in this manner, and Charles was left quite alone, he went up stairs to his mamma, and asked her leave to take a walk in the fields ; and away he went with his favourite dog, for he had no other company, and he said, “ Come along, Trim-bush, let us take a ramble together ; my brother always quarrels and fights with me, but I know you will not, my poor Trim-bush : here, my poor old fellow, here is a piece of bread which I saved from my breakfast on purpose for you.”

Charles had not walked very far, before he thought he heard Ben crying ;

and thinking it very probable that his brother was beating him, he went as fast as he possibly could towards the place whence the sound came. There he found poor black Ben with a load of faggots upon his back, almost enough to break it, and Edward whipping him because he cried, and said they were too heavy.

Charles began immediately to unload the poor boy ; but Edward said, if he attempted to do so, he would break every bone in his skin : he was, however, not to be frightened from his good-natured and humane intention, and therefore continued to take off the faggots, telling his brother, that if he came near to prevent him, he would try which had most strength ; and as Edward was a great coward, and never

attempted to strike any body but the poor black boy, who dared not return the blow, he thought it proper to walk away, and leave his brother to do as he liked. When they met afterwards, and Charles offered to shake hands with him, saying he was sorry for what he had said to him, and begged they might be good friends, he appeared very willing to forget what had passed, and assured him he forgave him with all his heart; but his whole thoughts were employed in finding out some way to be revenged on his brother, and he had soon an opportunity of doing what might have cost him his life, though it is to be hoped he was not quite wicked enough to desire it.

Walking one morning by the side of the river, he begged Charles to get into

a little boat which lay close to the shore, to look for a sixpence which he pretended to have left in it, and began to sob and cry, because he was afraid he had lost his money. Charles, who was always glad to oblige his brother, jumped into the boat with the utmost readiness, but in an instant the wicked Edward, having cut the rope by which it was fastened, away it went into the middle of the river, and no one can tell whither it might have been driven, or what terrible accident might have happened, if the wind had been high, and had not the good affectionate Ben stripped off his clothes, and plunged into the river to go to Charles's assistance.

Ben could swim like a fish, and was soon within reach of the boat, which, by getting hold of the end of the rope,

he brought near enough to the shore for Charles to jump out on a bank.

Edward fancied, that, as his mamma knew nothing of his tricks, and as he was certain Charles was too good-natured to tell tales, his papa would never hear of them: but he was very much mistaken. Old Nicholls, the butler, had observed his behaviour, and as soon as his master returned, took the first opportunity of telling him of every thing which had passed in his absence.

Mr. Spencer now recollects that he had been much to blame in keeping his sons at home, and determined to send them both to school immediately: he observed, however, that they were not equally deserving of kindness and indulgence, and that it would be proper and just to make Edward feel how

much he was displeased by the accounts he had received of his conduct: he was therefore sent to a school at a considerable distance from home, so far off, that he neither came home at Christmas nor Whitsuntide, nor saw any of his friends from one year to the other; he was not allowed to have any pocket money, for his papa said he would only make an ill use of it; nor had he ever any presents sent him of any kind.

Charles was only twenty miles from his father's house, and was always at home in the holidays: he had a great many things given to him on new year's day, and his papa brought him a little poney that he might ride about the park; and he always let poor Ben have a ride with him, for he loved him very much; and Ben, who was a grateful,

kind-hearted boy, did not forget how many times Charles had saved him from his wicked brother, and would have done any thing in the world to give him pleasure.

THE

TRUANT.

“WHAT will become of us to-morrow ?” exclaimed a boy at M—— school, to little George Clifton, as they were undressing to go to bed. “I am so frightened, that I shall not be able to close my eyes.”

George, who was very sleepy, and had no inclination to be disturbed, scarcely attended to what he was saying ; but, on being asked how *he*

thought to get off, and how *he* should relish a good sound flogging, if he could not excuse himself, he thought it time to inquire into his meaning, and was informed that some of the boys had that evening been robbing the master's garden, that they had taken away all the fruit, both ripe and unripe, and had trodden down and destroyed every thing.

George said he was very sorry for it, but he had no fears on his own account, for he could prove that he had drank tea and spent the whole evening at his aunt's, and was but just returned before their hour of going to bed; but Robert assured him, that all he could say would avail him nothing, and that he was very certain he would not be believed; and moreover, that the master had declared, as he could not discover

the offenders he would punish the whole school : " And for my part," said Robert, " I am determined not to stay here, to suffer for what I do not deserve. I can easily slip out of this window into the yard, and at the dawn of day I intend to set off ; and shall be many miles from M——, when you are begging in vain for forgiveness of your hard-hearted master."

George, who, though a good boy in other respects, had a very great dislike to the trouble of learning any thing, and had been sent to school much against his inclination, thought this an excellent opportunity of leaving it, and had no doubt, but having such a melancholy story to recount of the injustice of his master, added to the many hardships he fancied he had already endured

on different occasions, he should be able to prevail upon his papa to keep him at home ; and imagined, that, when he grew up to be a man, he should, by some means or other, have as much learning and knowledge as other people, without plaguing himself with so many books and lessons. Robert had therefore very little difficulty in persuading him to accompany him, which he had no reason to wish for, but that he knew he had always a good deal of pocket-money, which he hoped to get possession of, and cared very little, if once he could carry that point, what became of poor George. He knew him to be quite innocent, and also that the master was well acquainted with the names of the boys who had done the mischief, and consequently had no

thought of punishing the whole school ; but he was a wicked boy, had been the chief promoter of the robbery, long tired of confinement, and determined to run away. At four o'clock in the morning they got out of the window into the yard, jumped over a low wall, and were soon several miles from the school.

Poor little George began, before it was long, to grow very tired ; he was hungry also, and had nothing to eat. Robert asked him if he had any money, and said he would soon procure him something to eat, if he would give him the means of paying for it ; but the moment he had got his little purse in his hand, he told him that he must now wish him a good morning ; that he was not such a fool as to go home to get a

horsewhipping for having run away from school, but should go immediately to Portsmouth, where he should find ships enough ready to sail for different parts of the world, and would go to sea, which was, he said, the pleasantest life in the world ; and making him a very low bow, he set off immediately across the fields towards the high road, and was out of sight in an instant.

George began to cry bitterly ; he now repented having listened to this wicked boy's advice, and would have returned to school if he could ; but he did not know the way back again, and, if he had known it, would have been afraid to see his master. He wandered on the whole long day, without seeing any body who thought it worth their while to stop to listen to his tale ; and, at

length, towards the close of evening, quite ill for want of eating, and so tired that he could no longer stand, he seated himself by the side of a brook, and leaning his head upon his hand, sobbed aloud.

An old peasant returning from his labour, and passing that way, stopped to look at him, and perceiving that he was in much distress, went up to the place where he was sitting, and inquired kindly what ailed him.

“ I am a naughty boy,” said George, “ and do not deserve that you should take notice of me.”—“ When naughty boys confess their faults, they are more than half cured of them,” replied the old peasant. “ Whatever you have done, I am sure you repent of it, and I will take care of you.”

He then took him by the hand, and led him to his cottage, which was very near, and where he found an old woman spinning near the window, and a young one sitting with two pretty little girls and a boy, whom she was teaching to read: they had each a book in their hand, and were so attentive to their lessons, that they scarcely looked up when the door was opened.

“ There,” said the old peasant, “ sits my good wife, this is my daughter, and these are her children: we are poor people, and cannot afford to spend much money on their education, but they are very good, and endeavour to learn what they can from their mother, and get their lessons ready against the hour they go to school in the morning, that they may make the most of their

time, and not rob their parents by being idle."

" Rob their parents!" exclaimed George. " Yes, rob them," replied the old man. " Would it not be robbing their father and mother, if they allowed them to squander their money upon them in paying for their schooling to no purpose ?

George wiped the tears from his eyes, and said he was afraid he was a very bad boy; but he was sorry for it, and would endeavour to mend, if his papa could be prevailed on to pardon what was past. He then told the old man all that had happened, and how the wicked Robert had enticed him to run away from school; but he was so hungry, and so fatigued, that he could hardly speak or hold up his head. The young wo-

man gave him a large bowl of milk and bread, and put him into a neat, clean bed, where he slept soundly till eight o'clock the next morning, when, after a comfortable breakfast, the good peasant accompanied him to his father's house, and said so much in his favour, and of the sorrow he had shewn for his ill behaviour, that he was immediately forgiven.

He was, at his own desire, taken back to school, where he entreated his master to pardon the little attention he had paid to his books, and the instruction he had been so good as to give him ; as also his elopement, a fault he had, he said, repented of almost as soon as he had committed it.

The master readily forgave him upon his acknowledging his error, and assured

him, that, though he always punished those who deserved it, he knew very well how to distinguish the innocent from the guilty, and that, whilst he behaved like a good boy, he would have no reason to fear his anger.

J E A L O U S Y.

ROSE was eight years of age when her sister Harriet was born : she was extremely fond of the baby, watched its cradle whilst it slept, and was never tired of looking at it, and admiring its little features ; but she could not, without pain, observe, that she was no longer, as she had been accustomed to be, the *sole* object of her mamma's care and attention.

Harriet must not be left a moment ! Harriet must not be disturbed ! And even if her mamma had the head-ach, and Rose was not suffered to go into her room, the little stranger was admitted. She concluded that she was no longer

loved by any body, for even the servants were, she fancied, more occupied with her little sister than with her, or any thing which concerned her ; and before she was ten years of age, she was become so very jealous and fretful, that she took no pleasure in any thing, nor was it in the power of any one to please or amuse her.

One day walking in the garden with her mamma, who carried the little Harriet in her arms, and coming to a part of it where several tall and far-spreading trees afforded them a pleasant shade from the heat of the sun, they stopped to enjoy its coolness. The gardener was ordered to bring them some cherries, and they sat down on the grass to await his coming : the little one, however, had no inclination to be so long

still, and her mamma, to please and keep her quiet, lifted her up, and seated her on the bough of a tree which spread above their heads.

Rose immediately changed colour; her countenance, which a moment before was tolerably cheerful, now became gloomy and sullen; she leaned her cheek upon her hand, and her eyes followed them, expressing nothing but discontent and jealousy.

Her mamma was not long before she perceived the angry glances thrown upon her, and asked her, in a tone of displeasure, what they signified? "I cannot help fearing," said Rose, "that you no longer love me, now that you have another little girl. I remember, when you played with me all day; I was then continually on your knee, and

every thing you had was brought out to amuse me ; the servants also thought of nothing but how to give me pleasure ; but now I go neglected about the house, and nobody minds me : it is true, I have every thing I want, and my papa and you are always buying me toys and pretty things of one kind or another ; and I have often some of my little friends, whom you allow me to invite to drink tea, and spend the afternoon with me ; but——”

“ But,” interrupted her mamma, “ I no longer take you upon my knee like a baby, or carry you in my arms ; nor have I strength sufficient to lift you up, and place you upon the bough of a tree, to please and make you quiet, as I have done by your little sister. You forget, I imagine, that you are ten years

old, and that if I were to treat you in the same manner as I do a child of two, we should both be laughed at by every creature who might happen to see us. Reflect, my dear Rose, and do not suppose, that, because the helpless age of this little darling demands more care and attention than is necessary to you—because, being her nurse, I am obliged to have her often with me, when the company of another would be troublesome and inconvenient to me—do not fancy, my love, from these circumstances, that you are less beloved by either your papa or myself; but that as you increase in years, we shall shew our affection to you in a very different way to that in which we now do; as at present we treat you much otherwise than we did when you was of the age of your sister Harriet.

“ I have long observed, with much uneasiness and concern, the fretfulness and discontent you have exhibited in your countenance at every mark of tenderness and care shewn to your sister. If you suffer this humour to grow upon you, it will be observed by every body, and you will then, in reality, be disliked and shunned by all your acquaintance, though at present it is only in your own fancy that you are so. Recollect yourself in time, re-assume your cheerfulness, assist me in taking care of this sweet child, instead of being angry at the attention I shew her; and be assured that we feel an equal affection towards you both, though we do not think it proper to treat you, my dear Rose, as we do a baby of two years old.”

EDMOND.

“WHAT an unlucky boy I am!” said Edmond, running towards his papa, whom he had been seeking over all the house and gardens. “My grandmamma has changed her mind about going to my uncle’s, and, instead of taking me with her to spend a fortnight at his house, when I had set my heart upon it, I must content myself at home, she says, and wait for another opportunity. Every thing goes wrong with me—it was but last week that the pigs got into

my little garden, and destroyed every thing in it."

" Stop ! stop ! interrupted his papa, " and, before you complain of your evil destiny, recollect, that if you had not heard the pigs in your garden, and ran in haste to drive them out of it, you would not have seen your little brother, whom you seized by the arm on the very edge of the pond, and who, in another moment, would probably have fallen into it, and would have been drowned before any of the family had missed him. It is not impossible but that you may have cause to rejoice some time hence at what now appears to you such a mighty disappointment."

His papa's words were soon verified : for not more than ten days had elapsed after this conversation, when they re-

ceived a letter which filled them with the severest affliction. A servant belonging to his uncle had caught a dreadful putrid sore throat and fever, of which he died almost immediately, and which had infected the whole family. Edmond heard with the utmost grief, that one of his cousins was no more, and that the other lay in so dangerous a state, that his life was despaired of: and he did not fail to offer his unfeigned thanks to God for having preserved him from the danger to which he would have been exposed, if his grandmamma had not suddenly changed her intention of going to his uncle's: he determined also, that he would never, in future, complain of any trifling disappointments he might chance to meet with, or find fault, as he had too often done,

with the arrangements of Providence; but conclude, that, however extraordinary many things might appear to him, being ordered by Him who knows best what is fit for us, they must, some way or other, sooner or later, turn to our advantage and happiness.

Edmond, in the long walks he took with his papa, often met with things which appeared to him very strange, and which (notwithstanding the resolution he had made, and the rule he had laid down never to find fault), made him thoughtful, and wish to know why they were permitted.

An old man, who was universally esteemed in the village, had been involved in perplexity and trouble, as it appeared to him, very unjustly. He was tenant to a rich man, and had been

long and comfortably settled in a prosperous way in a little farm, which lay in a fertile and beautiful valley belonging to his large estate.

The rich man was hard-hearted and revengeful, and, taking a dislike to poor old Davis on some very trifling occasion, had turned him out of the farm at so short a notice, that he had had the utmost difficulty to find a place to take shelter in. He had a great deal of trouble in removing his cattle and his poultry, his corn and his hay-mows, and every thing belonging to his farm; and said he was sure it would be a couple of years before he should be able to recover the expense and loss of time; and Edmond, who never went into the village without paying him a visit, and loved to chat with him and his old dame,

never heard them talk of it without thinking is was, at least, *a pity* that he had met with so great a misfortune.

The winter was very severe, the snow fell fast, it was deep, and lay very long on the ground. Davis was obliged to take his cattle in from the fields, and feed them entirely on hay ; his poultry required the utmost care and attention, and every thing in his garden was in danger of perishing. “ This is a sad winter for poor old Davis,” said Edmond to his papa ; “ I am afraid it will put him another year behind hand ; I wish he had not been driven from that flourishing farm in the valley.”

“ I wish so too,” replied his papa, “ if it would have been more for his good to have remained there—but God knows best !”

The spring returned, the snow melted, torrents of water fell from the hills—the brooks swelled, and overflowed the meadows—every thing was inundated: the farm in the valley was entirely destroyed, and all the cattle with which the rich man had stocked it were drowned. Davis, on his hill, had felt the sharpness and biting frost of winter; he had heard the wind roar, and the rain beat against his casement: but when the snow melted, he felt no ill effects from it, but turned out his cattle, which he had sheltered whilst it lay on the ground, to feast on the fresh herbage which had been preserved under it.

“ I perceive now,” said Edmond, “ that I have been once more mistaken, and that, instead of thinking Davis an object of pity, I should look upon him as a fortunate man. If he had re-

mained in the valley, his whole property would have been destroyed, and he would have been a beggar: now he has but to be doubly attentive to his labour, and he will soon recover the expense of his removal: he will then be just as well as he was, and he might this day have been without a morsel of bread, or a shilling to purchase one.

THE

GHOST AND THE DOMINOS.

SOPHY Benson, when she was only eleven years old, could write, read, draw, and play on the piano-forte, better than any little girl of her age in the whole neighbourhood ; she was obedient to her papa and mamma, affectionate to her brothers and sisters, and would do any thing to oblige her friends, except going up stairs after night, staying in the garden alone a moment after the dusk of the evening, or going to bed

before her sister. On these points, though she really wished to shew a readiness to do as she was desired, and had often attempted to do so, she never had been able to find resolution sufficient to carry her through with it; for she had heard of ghosts, giants, fairies, and monsters of divers kinds, and was never an instant alone in the dark, without expecting to see one or the other; concluding, it must be imagined, that it was customary with those gentlemen and ladies to pay their visits, each with a wax taper in their hands, to exhibit their persons by.

Sophy had a brother, a good-natured boy, one year younger than herself, whom she always contrived to get to accompany her when she had any thing to fetch from her chamber after night;

but unfortunately, she had repeated so many terrible stories to him (to shew that she was not afraid without reason), that poor Harry soon became almost as great a coward as his sister; and they found, that whenever they had occasion to go out of the parlour after candle-light, it was necessary to procure a third person to be of their party, for they no longer thought themselves in safety together.

It may be thought a fortunate circumstance, that the infection did not spread, or the whole family would soon have been obliged to move in a body; but there was little danger of any thing so ridiculous: it was, on the contrary, much to be wondered at, that a sensible girl, like Sophy Benson, should have been capable of such a weakness, and

that she never gave herself time to reflect, that there could not be the smallest foundation for the silly fears with which she had filled her head.

Her mamma had taken a great deal of pains to endeavour to convince her of the folly of indulging herself in such ridiculous fancies, but it was to no purpose; her imagination was continually making her see strange sights, and hear extraordinary noises; and though she exposed herself to the ridicule and laughter of her elder brothers and sisters, when her giant proved to be a tree, and her dismal groans to be occasioned by the noise of a door or a window-shutter on a stormy night: still she went on in the same way, and had made poor little Harry as foolish as herself.

Whenever she was alone, either in the house or garden, a moment later than she liked to be, her heart immediately began to beat, and she flew like lightning to seek protection ; her hands clasped, her elbows squeezed close to her sides, and her head hung down—and in this way, every object she glanced her eyes upon appeared to her fancy something extraordinary : had she but summoned resolution to take a second look, she must have laughed at her own folly.

One evening she came screaming into the parlour, and assured her mamma that she had had the greatest difficulty to escape from a hideous creature, who, with outspread arms, was on the point of seizing her, and begged the door might be locked immediately. Her

mamma, and her brothers and sisters, laughed immoderately at her strange story, which mortified her extremely; but they could not prevail on her to *shew* them where she had seen the terrible creature: she could, however, tell them the exact spot, though she endeavoured to dissuade them from venturing to go to it; but she could not prevail on any of them to be frightened, and they soon discovered the monster, with its outspread arms, to be nothing more than the horse on which the servant had been beating her papa's coat.

One evening, when the moon shone bright and fine, and Sophy and Harry had a very great desire to fetch a box of dominos which was in the nursery, and which they well knew they should not have, unless they went them-

selves to fetch it, after sitting half an hour, whispering and endeavouring to assume sufficient courage for so great an undertaking, they at length determined to go, for they were tired of having nothing to amuse themselves with, and had still a long winter evening before them.

Quaking through fear, and holding as fast as they possibly could by each other's hand, they ascended the stairs, got into the passage which led to the nursery, and were just going to open the door, when Sophy recollect ed, that if Harry was seen by her maid, she should be finely laughed at, and asked if she dared not venture to take a step without having him to protect her; she therefore begged he would wait at the door whilst she went into the nursery to

fetch the dominos ; but Harry would not hear of such a thing, and said he would not stay in the passage alone on any account whatever.

Sophy was so desirous of appearing courageous to her maid, that she tried every means she could think of to engage Harry to wait for her ; told him she would not be a moment, that the moon shone as bright as day—but all was to no purpose, till by promising to give him her little box of colours, and her ivory cup and ball, she at length prevailed upon him to consent.

She walked into the nursery with an air of unconcern and boldness not at all usual to her ; but it was quite lost, for Mary was not there and she knew not how to venture so far as a closet at the other end of it, to take out the box of

dominos, but was on the point of calling Harry to come to her, when thinking the maid might be in the next room, she wished, if possible, to save her credit. With trembling steps she advanced towards the closet, reached it without any *terrible accident*, and having opened the door, began to grope about for the box: it was neither on the first shelf nor the second, and passing her hand along the third, it fell upon something colder than stone.

Afraid of being laughed at, she determined not to scream, but with the utmost expedition quitted the nursery, without thinking of the dominos, and went to join her brother; but she had no sooner reached the passage, than she saw (too plainly she saw it to believe it

to be the effect of fear) a figure dressed in long white robes, having one arm extended towards her, entirely covered with black, and in a low tremulous voice, it called “Sophy, Sophy, Sophy.”

This was the most alarming and terrible adventure she had ever met with; and if she had command enough over herself not to scream when she touched the unaccountable cold thing in the closet, she now could shew no such fortitude; but sinking on the floor, for her knees could no longer support her weight, she screamed so loud, that the poor ghost, who had been as much terrified as herself, throwing aside his white robes, ran towards her for protection, crying, “Sophy, Sophy! my dear Sophy! is it you?—Oh dear! I thought it was all over with me; I have

been almost smothered since you left me, and really thought I was going to be buried alive."

Mary, who heard the bustle, now made her appearance with a light, and, perceiving what had happened, became extremely angry, asking them if they imagined she had nothing to do but to wash their linen, to have it pulled about the dirty passage. "And here is my black silk handkerchief!" exclaimed she in a violent rage.—"Did I wash it so well in small beer, to make it look nice and fresh, for you to twist it about your arm, master Harry? Pray look what a condition you have made it in."

Harry looked extremely foolish, when he discovered that the only danger with which he had been menaced, was that of taking cold by having been covered

with wet linen. The truth was, that, when his sister left him, he was so much afraid of being alone, that though he longed for the colours, and the cup and ball, he thought he was paying much too high a price for them, and almost repented of his promise. Willing, however, to gain the two things he most wished for, he determined to bear the lonely situation he was left in, but fancied if he could get away from the door, and place his back against the wall, he should be much safer, and more out of the way of danger.

Endeavouring by these means to secure himself, and shutting his eyes, that he might not see any thing disagreeable by the light of the moon, whose beams reflected different objects along the wall, he unfortunately stepped upon the end

of a line, on which Mary had hung to dry the whole labour of the day, and having entangled his feet in it, by some means or other gave it such a jerk, that the nail sprung out, and in an instant poor Harry was half smothered under the weight of a quantity of wet linen, which he concluded (agreeably to the wonderful and surprising histories his sister had recounted to him) could be nothing less than some giant, who was going to bury him alive.

When Mary visited the closet, her anger rose to a prodigious pitch; for Sophy, in groping about for her box of dominos, had not only dirtied her fingers and hands, but had left the marks of them on Mary's new-washed caps and handkerchiefs, which she had put

aside on a plate, till she could find time to iron them.

The whole story was repeated in the parlour, and the evening spent in mirth at the expense of the cowards.

FIDO.

PAULINA going to spend the afternoon with her little cousins, arrived at their door at the very instant that they were dragging out a poor little dog, once so great a favourite that it was fed with every kind of nicety, and reposed, when it was inclined to sleep, on a beautiful silk cushion.

“ What are you going to do with poor Fido ? ” inquired Paulina.

“ Oh, the nasty thing ! ” replied her cousin Emily. “ Pray look how ugly it

is grown—I would not keep it in the house on any account—I am going to give it to those boys you see at the gate: I do not care what they do with it: my brother Charles has given me a most beautiful little creature—come in, and I will shew it to you.”

“ Stop, stop, for pity’s sake!” exclaimed Paulina. “ Pray do not give poor Fido to those boys, to be worried and tormented to death; let me have him; I will carry him home to my hospital, and will take care of him as long as he lives.”

Fido had unfortunately strolled into the kitchen (where certainly neither young ladies nor their dogs can have any business), when the cook was very busy in getting ready for dinner, and (I

hope without intending such a piece of cruelty) she had thrown a quantity of boiling water over the poor little creature's head and back, and scalded him in so terrible a manner, that no one thought he could have lived through the day.

Emily was so angry with the cook, and shed so many tears when she beheld the agony of her favourite, that one would have thought she had the best heart in the world, and that she had a very great regard for it; but as soon as it was recovered, and she saw it had lost one eye, and that all the side of its head, and its whole back, was without hair, she could not bear the sight of it: it was turned out of the parlour, and kicked about by everybody, glad to pick up any bone it could

meet with, and to sleep in a corner on straw, instead of the silk cushion it had been accustomed to ; and, at length, had not Paulina arrived in time to save it, would have been given to half a dozen unfeeling boys, who would soon have destroyed it.

Paulina was very little pleased with her cousin Emily on this occasion, for her own disposition was very different : she was so humane, so kind to every body and every creature in distress, that she was beloved by all who knew her ; she had quite a little hospital of sick and lame animals and birds : a dog, which had had its leg broken by being caught in a gin ; a cat with one ear, the other having been bitten off by a large mastiff ; and a blind squirrel ; she had a little goldfinch in a cage, which had

had its wings torn off by a cat, and as it could no longer fly down from its perch to drink, and return when it liked, she had contrived a little ladder, on which it could hop up and down without any difficulty ; a blackbird, almost frozen to death, which she had picked up in the snow, but which never recovered the use of one of its legs, sung very merrily, however, in its cage, for it was well fed and taken care of ; and one or two blind cocks, which she had bought from boys who had been fighting them, and were going to throw at them, by way of *finishing the fun* (as they called it) ; and several lame hens, become so by some accident or other, lived comfortably in her little poultry-yard, for she took care to feed all her

pensioners herself, and never trusted the care of them to any other person.

Paulina had great pleasure in procuring every comfort she could for her poor animals; and her papa and mamma, to encourage her kind and humane disposition, increased her pocket-money, that she might be able to purchase barley for her poultry, and seed for her birds: her brothers also, who were at school, often sent her presents for that purpose. As she grew up, her humanity was shewn to her fellow-creatures in distress, as much as it had been in her childhood to the dumb creation; and as God had given her the means of doing good, she freely indulged herself in acts of kindness, for which she received a thousand thanks and blessings where-

ever she appeared: she was beloved by all her neighbours, both poor and rich, every thing prospered with her, and she was happy and contented, as she deserved to be.

THE

REWARD OF BENEVOLENCE.

Mrs. Clifford being particularly satisfied with the attention her three children, Alfred, Robert, and Helen, had for some time past paid to their lessons, and to the instruction of their masters, told them she would treat them with a charming walk in the woods on the opposite side of the river: and that if they would carry some bread or biscuits with them, she thought they should have no difficulty in finding a house

where they might procure some milk, and instead of returning home to drink tea, she would spend the whole afternoon and evening in rambling about with them.

This was charming news for the young folks, who took care not to give her the trouble of waiting for them, for they were all three ready at least half an hour before the time she had appointed for their departure, which they looked forward to with the utmost impatience ; and the moment Mrs. Clifford joined them in the hall, away they all went, with joyful hearts and cheerful faces, through the field, and down the long lane, which led to the ferry.

“ This is very pleasant, mamma,” said Alfred ; “ I think I should never be tired of walking in the fields and

woods ; yet I must own I do long for winter, that we may purchase the magic lantern we are to have. I think, with the guinea grandpapa has given each of us, and what we had before in our little purses, we shall be able to have a very large one."

" O dear !" exclaimed Helen, " how delightful it will be to be able to see it as often as we please, and to show it to our friends ; and, mamma, do you know that Robert is to be the person who shews it, for he says he can talk just like the man who came to our house last year."

" So I can," answered Robert ; " and I wish it was bought, that you might hear what a long story I shall tell you about the sun and the moon, and the King of Prussia and his hussars, and

the cat and the cook ! I would rather have a magic lantern, than any thing in the whole world !”

Chatting in this manner, and amusing themselves by looking at different objects as they passed along, they found themselves at the ferry before they expected it ; and the boat being just ready to put off, they stepped into it, and seated themselves with several others, who were going over to the other side of the river.

Their attention was very soon drawn to a poor woman, who with an infant on her knee, and a little girl and boy by her side, whom she frequently kissed and pressed to her bosom, wept as if her heart was breaking. As soon as they were landed, Mrs. Clifford stopped the woman, kindly inquired into

the cause of her distress, and was immediately informed by her, that she had lately lost her husband, who, having been long in an ill state of health, and unable to work, had left her encumbered with several debts, which she had not the means of paying; and that though she laboured very hard, and had discharged some of the small ones, a hard-hearted man, to whom she owed six guineas, declaring he would not wait a day longer, had that morning seized upon her furniture, and all her little property, determined, as he said, to have his money before six o'clock, or to turn her and her children out to sleep in the high road, or where they thought fit.

She had been, she told Mrs. Clifford, to an uncle of her husband's, who lived

at the market-town, begging him to take pity upon her and her innocent children : “ but, Madam,” added she, “ he was deaf to my entreaties, and turned me from his door, and I am now going home to see all my things taken from me ; and what will become of us this night, God alone can tell ! ”

Mrs. Clifford was extremely affected by this melancholy tale, and walked with the poor unhappy woman to her cottage, where they really found two ill-looking men taking down the bed, and packing up the furniture. The poor creature began to wring her hands and cry bitterly, and the children, though they did not understand what the men were going to do, clung to their mother, and would not move from her side.

Alfred, Robert and Helen were, however, old enough to understand perfectly well the distress of the poor woman, and the misery and wretchedness to which she and her helpless children were exposed ; and, fortunately for her, their tender and compassionate hearts immediately prompted them to endeavour to relieve her. The pleasure they had promised themselves in purchasing a magic lantern, and in being in possession of such an amusement for the long evenings of the approaching winter, appeared to them very trifling in comparison to the delight of snatching this poor family out of the hands of the unfeeling wretches they had to deal with ; and leading their mamma into the little garden, earnestly entreated her to take the three guineas their grand-

papa had given them, as well as the contents of their little purses, and employ the whole to relieve the poor woman, and begged her in the most pressing manner to make up the deficiency.

Mrs. Clifford pressed them tenderly to her heart, expressing the greatest satisfaction at the resolution they had taken, and assuring them she would make up the sum with the greatest pleasure, and that the proof they now gave of their feeling ahd humanity made them dearer to her than ever; adding, that she was certain four-and-twenty hours would not pass before they would be rewarded for their goodness.

The men were immediately stopped, the debt discharged, and the furniture replaced in proper order: the poor woman knew not how to express her joy,

and her gratitude ; she scarcely knew what she was doing, but at length recollecting herself, entreated Mrs. Clifford and her children to be seated, and accept of such refreshment as she had to offer them. Her little table was soon covered with a cloth as white as snow ; and fresh milk, eggs, butter, and a nice brown loaf were set before them, of which they partook with great satisfaction.

They did not quit this little family till a late hour, and could talk of nothing on their way home but the pleasure they felt in the reflection of having left them so happy ; of how they had been delighted when they saw the two hard-hearted men walk out of the cottage, and how differently the poor woman and her children would pass the

night, to what they might have expected. Alfred said, the good action they had done that afternoon would be the pleasantest they could have to talk of in the winter evenings; and Robert was of opinion that a visit now and then to the cottage (which their mamma had promised them) would afford prettier stories for him to repeat, than any thing he could tell of the King of Prussia or his hussars. As for Helen, she declared that her heart was so light, and she felt herself so happy and joyful, that she could almost jump over the moon.

They retired to rest in this pleasant disposition, and told their mamma the next morning, that they had never been so happy in their lives; that they went to bed, thinking on the good they had done, and, after thanking God, who

had given them the means of doing it, they had immediately fallen into a sweet sleep ; that the moment they awoke, they had found themselves in the same happy humour, pleased with themselves, and with every body they saw ; and were very well convinced that the magic lantern could never have procured them one quarter of the pleasure which they now felt, and which would be renewed every time they visited the poor woman at the cottage, and whenever they recollected her story.

“ I told you, my children,” said Mrs. Clifford, “ that four-and-twenty hours would not pass before you would be rewarded ; and you must now, I am certain, be well convinced, that the heart-felt pleasure arising from the reflection of such an act of kindness and

benevolence to a fellow-creature in distress, is the greatest and most solid reward that could possibly have been bestowed upon you, far superior to, and more lasting than any satisfaction you could have procured by laying out your money in any other way."

J E M I M A.

MRS. Franklin, a widow lady of very considerable fortune, inhabited an elegant house on Richmond Hill, kept a number of servants, and had the most splendid equipage in the whole neighbourhood. She had an only daughter, to whom she was fondly indulgent, and on whom she determined to bestow the best education that could possibly be procured for her, let the expense be what it would.

Jemima was a very amiable child ; and if she had been so fortunate as to have been placed under the care of any one a little more disposed than her mother was to combat her fancies and want of resolution, she would not have had to regret the immense sums squandered upon her to no kind of purpose, nor to wish she could recal (as she often vainly did) the time she had trifled away in doing nothing.

It must appear very extraordinary that this should have been the unhappy fate of a little girl, who wished so much to profit by the instruction procured for her, and had the greatest desire to be an accomplished woman ; but Jemima wished to be accomplished, without having the trouble of making herself so, and possessed neither the *resolution* nor *perse-*

verance so absolutely necessary to the attainment of the perfection she aimed at.

She began every thing with eagerness and alacrity ; but the most trifling difficulty which came in her way put a total stop to her progress, and she immediately persuaded herself that it was not possible she ever should be able to surmount them.

She had from her infancy been extremely fond of drawing, and desiring to be instructed in that agreeable art, one of the first masters was procured for her : she had in a very short time succeeded in copying, with tolerable correctness, the first things he gave her to do ; and the greatest hopes were entertained of her making a great proficiency in what she appeared to prefer to every other amusement. The master

now gave her some other drawings to copy, which required a little more attention and study, and she began to find difficulties in her way, which she had not foreseen: she tried them twice —they were pretty well, but not perfect; a few faults still remained, which her master pointed out to her. Jemima concluded she *never* should do them better; and as he insisted that she could not proceed till she had made herself mistress of the trifles he objected to, she determined to give up all thoughts of drawing figure, and apply herself entirely to landscape.

She was delighted with this new employment; her master had the sweetest drawings of trees, cottages, and rivers, that had ever been seen! She should never be tired of copying such pretty

things, and she was sure she should not meet with half the difficulties which were to be found in drawing figure.

She made outlines of several trees, and had she but been possessed of perseverance enough to have perfected herself in that part, before she attempted to go farther, all would have been easy and pleasant ; but Jemima knew nothing of perseverance or patience, and insisted on having a finished landscape to do directly ; and the master, to shew her how incapable she was of executing such a thing, indulged her in her fancy : but when he endeavoured to explain to her the nature of perspective, light and shadow, and several other rules necessary for her to understand, Jemima dropped the pencil from her fingers. She had not perfectly comprehended

his meaning, and wanted resolution to question him, and endeavour to make it clearer, and once more concluded she never should be able to make any thing of it, and that it would be much more prudent to turn to some other pursuit.

Accordingly the drawing-master was dismissed; and all the money her mamma had paid him for his attendance, for quantities of paper, pencils, chalk, and (which was of much more consequence, and which no sum could recal) the loss of her own precious time, were thrown away to no purpose. But Jemima did not mean to stop here; she should do very well without drawing, she said, and she would give all the time she had intended to employ that way entirely to music, and had no doubt, but that by the time she was sixteen she should be

quite a proficient ; was very sorry she had so long neglected her piano forte, and requested of her master that he would bring her some better music than the simple easy lessons she had been playing, assuring him that she intended to apply very seriously. But, alas ! she had no better success in this than in her drawing ; difficulties obtruded themselves whatever she turned to, and when she quitted the piano for the harp, and from the harp returned to the piano, she found herself just in the same predicament.

The music was given up for the French and Italian languages, geography, and botany, all of which ended in the same way : nothing was to be learnt without a sufficient stock of perseverance and resolution to surmount the obsta-

cles which lay in the way ; and as the *smallest* was quite enough to stop Jemima's progress, it is not to be wondered at (as she was allowed to have her own way in every thing) that at the age of sixteen, though what would have been a comfortable independence to many, had been spent upon her education, that she knew no one thing in the world.

At twenty she had but too much cause to repent of her folly : her mother, by lawsuits, and other unforeseen events, lost the greater part of her fortune, and was obliged to retire into a remote part of the country ; and in that lonely place what a comfort and amusement would she have found in music or drawing, had she but endeavoured, when she had so good an op-

portunity, to perfect herself in either! But she had nothing to do, no means of employing herself agreeably, but spent her time in loitering about from one window to another, tired of herself, and tiring every body who saw her.

THE

TRIFLER.

WILLIAM was come home to spend the holidays; but he had scarcely time to speak to his papa and mamma, before he ran out to visit his poultry, his rabbits, and his little garden; and from thence to the village, to see his nurse, and then to the cottage of old John, who had taught him how to catch birds, make little fishing-nets, and how to take care of his tame rabbits.

He found the poor old man in the utmost grief and consternation; a re-

cruiting party had come into the village, and had enticed his son away from him. He had enlisted : he was gone from his aged father, who had no other comfort in the world : he depended upon him for his support, for he was a strong, healthy, hard-working young man ; and John was grown old and infirm, and could no longer work to maintain himself.

“ My dear young master,” said he, “ I am almost broken-hearted ; a trifle of money would engage the sergeant to give him up, if I could get it before they take him to the magistrate at the next town ; and he, poor boy ! desires no better, for they had made him drink more than he is accustomed to do, or he never would have thought of leaving me : the moment he was sober he re-

pented of it ; but it is too late—I have no money, and they will soon be gone. Wretched old man that I am ! what will become of me ? ”

“ Pray do not grieve so, old John,” said William ; “ I will return to my papa directly, and I am very sure he will not leave you in distress. I will be back again in half an hour, so pray be comforted—your son shall not be taken from you.” And away he went, fully intending to do as he had said he would ; but unfortunately William was not to be depended upon, for he continually deferred to another time what ought to be done at the moment, and trifled away hours in which he had engaged to render little services to people who depended upon his promises.

It is scarcely to be credited, that,

anxious as he appeared to relieve the poor old man's distress, he should, before he got half way to his papa's house, if not *forget* the errand on which he was going with so much seeming expedition, at least suffer a new object to draw off his attention from the principal part of it ; and that he should accept of an invitation to dine, without once recollecting, that, unless the business could be settled immediately, the recruiting party would have left the village, and poor John would be abandoned to misery and distress.

Meeting with two young gentlemen who lived in the neighbourhood, and being invited by them to go and dine at their house, their servant was dispatched, whilst they amused themselves in the wood ; to ask his papa's leave ; and as

it was readily granted, and he did not return till evening, the recruiting party had left the village many hours before old John had the means sent him of procuring his son's discharge.

William was extremely grieved when he perceived the sad effects his neglect had occasioned, the agony of the poor old man, and the anger of his papa, who, after threatening to send him immediately back to school, took this opportunity of making him recollect how many times he had brought trouble and distress upon different persons by the unpardonable fault he was continually committing, through his trifling, unsteady disposition, and assured him, that if he suffered so bad a custom to grow up with him, he would be pointed out as a man on whose word no one could

place the smallest confidence, and whose promises were of no value—a frivolous, despicable character, with whom no worthy people would associate. He then ordered his chaise to be got ready, and went over to the market town; the magistrate was his particular friend, and he had the pleasure (though not without some difficulty) of freeing the young man, and of sending him home to comfort and support his aged and afflicted father.

THE
COUSINS.
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PRISCILLA lost her mother when she was very young : her father was in the East Indies, and she was taken home by his sister, Mrs. Hamilton, who loved her for his sake, and shewed her the greatest kindness and attention ; but her daughters, Emily and Lucy, were not both equally kind to their cousin. Lucy was very fond of her, but Emily was jealous and envious, and could not bear the marks of tenderness bestowed upon her by her mother.

Priscilla had a most affectionate heart, and would cry for hours together, when she thought she had done any thing to make her cousin angry ; which she imagined must certainly be the case (though she could not recollect what it could possibly be), for it never entered into her head that any one could be displeased with her, when she had done nothing to offend them, and little suspected, that when she was praised by her aunt for her even temper and constant good humour, for her attention to her lessons, and the progress she made in every thing she undertook to learn, her kind and gentle manner towards the servants, and her charity and humanity to her fellow-creatures in distress : she had no idea that those praises increased the dislike which the ill-natured Emily

had conceived to her the moment she came into the house, who, instead of endeavouring to imitate her good qualities, took every method in her power to cast a shade over them, and to fill every one's head with tales to her disadvantage.

As they grew older, Emily's dislike to her cousin increased every hour, as did the amiable Priscilla's endeavours to soften it by every mean she could employ, and by seeking every opportunity of obliging her. If Emily had any work to do, of which she appeared tired, Priscilla was sure to be ready to finish it for her : if she wished for a nosegay, Priscilla would search over the whole village till she had procured the prettiest and sweetest flowers to make one for her ; but all was to no pur-

pose—she hated her the more for the trouble she took to please her.

One day Mrs. Hamilton returned from the town, where she had been to purchase different things to send to her sister in Scotland; and, amongst the rest, a very beautiful netting-box, which she intended as a present to her, was shewn to the young ladies, and greatly admired by all three. It was extremely delicate, and, after they had sufficiently examined its beauty, it was placed on a small table, with positive orders from Mrs. Hamilton that it should not be touched; but returning in the evening from the house of a friend in the neighbourhood, with whom she had dined, and recollecting that curiosity might lead some of the servants to open it, she took it up in the paper, as it lay

on the table, and locked it in a book-case.

The following day, being busily employed in packing up the things she had purchased for her sister, and thinking to put some cotton into the little netting-box, to preserve the winders and other things from rubbing, how was she surprised at perceiving that the lining was green instead of pale pink, and that several parts of it were totally different from that which she had purchased the day before !

Lucy said she was very sure it was not the same box her mamma had shewn to them ; Emily was of the same opinion : but Priscilla only blushed without saying a word.

“ Somebody has broken my box, and replaced it with another not half so

pretty," said Mrs. Hamilton in an angry tone; " I had positively forbid either of you to touch it, and I insist on knowing which of you has done this mischief."

" I am afraid," said Emily, pretending to feel extremely for her cousin's confusion. " that poor Priscilla has had the misfortune to break it; and indeed, mamma, if you will but observe how she blushes, and that she has not a word to say in her own defence, you need not have any doubt of the matter."

Priscilla assured her aunt that she had never touched her box after she had shewn it to her; Emily gave the same assurance with regard to herself, and Lucy declared that she had not been in the room where it was, from the time

that her mamma went out, till she returned in the evening.

Mrs. Hamilton, determined to know the truth, asked the young ladies what use they had made of the guinea they had each received on new year's day, saying her box had cost that sum, and could not have been replaced without an equal one.

"Here is mine," eagerly exclaimed Emily, "in my little work-trunk."

"Half of mine, my dear mamma," said Lucy, "you will recollect, I paid for a box of colours, and some drawing paper; and here is the other half in my purse."

"And where is *your* guinea, Priscilla?" demanded Mrs. Hamilton.— "And what is the reason, that, instead of shewing the same readiness with your

cousins to clear yourself, you only blush and hang down your head, without speaking a single word?"

"I cannot produce my guinea," answered Priscilla; "but believe me, my dear aunt, when I assure you that I never touched your box."

Emily, who had her reasons for wishing the subject might be dropped, though not from any motive of tenderness for her cousin, now earnestly intreated her mamma not to inquire any farther into the matter, as it only distressed the *poor thing*, and would make her utter a thousand falsities. But old Martha, their maid, who had stood all the time pinching the strings of her apron, clasping her hands together, and then lifting them up to heaven, with many other gestures which marked her impatience,

now no longer able to contain her indignation, burst out like thunder, and asked Emily how she could possibly stand there, looking her mamma in the face, and presume to talk of *falsities*, when she must be conscious she was at that moment guilty, not only of a most terrible and wicked falsity, in accusing an innocent person of the fault she had herself committed, but was also making the most ungrateful return that any one could be capable of, for an action which certainly deserved the greatest praise, and which she must be conscious she owed to her cousin's generosity and kindness. She then proceeded to acquaint her mistress, that walking with Priscilla round the garden, about half an hour after she had left the house, and coming near the

parlour window, which happened to be open, they had perceived the netting-box lying on the marble hearth, broken into a dozen pieces, and Emily with her back towards them, picking them up ; that Priscilla had, in a low whisper, entreated her in the most earnest manner not to speak ; and that having stood a little aside, they had seen her go and throw all the pieces into the pond in the front garden, and then run up stairs as fast as possible.

" The dear Miss Priscilla," continued old nurse, " then begged me, as the greatest of all favours, to go immediately into the town, to the shop where you had bought the netting-box, and with *her* guinea to, get one exactly like it : and this I did to oblige her, and because it never was in my power to

refuse her any thing she asks, though I must say I thought Miss Emily little deserved her kindness; for this is but one out of a hundred stories she has told of her, and ill-natured tricks she has played her, in return for her constantly doing every thing she could to oblige her, and for the trouble she has taken so many times to hide her faults. I thought the box I purchased so exactly like yours, Madam, that I concluded you never would discover what had happened; and Miss Priscilla was quite happy in thinking you would be spared the vexation of knowing it had been broken, and her cousin the anger which she would have incurred, by disobeying your orders. We were, however, disappointed; but Miss Emily must have guessed, when her cousin could

not produce her guinea, what use she had made of it ; and that was the reason why she wished you to drop the subject, for she might well suppose her falsity and ill nature must at length be made known to you."

It is almost needless to add, that Emily entirely lost her mamma's good opinion ; Priscilla lived very happily from that time, affectionately beloved by Mrs. Hamilton and her cousin Lucy, and doated on by old Martha, who never forgot to entertain her friends and acquaintance with the story of the broken netting-box, so disgraceful to Miss Emily, and so much to the honour of her darling Priscilla.

THE

TRAVELLERS.

AT six o'clock on a fine morning in the beginning of September, Mrs. Cecil, with her daughter Matilda, stepped into a post-chaise in order to begin a journey towards London.

The house she had for some time inhabited stood in a distant and romantic part of Wales, many miles from the public road, so that they could advance but slowly, and often walked up steep hills, and over craggy mountains, either

from regard to their own safety, or because they were tired of the carriage.

Matilda, after riding a whole day, wished she could perform the remaining part of the journey on foot, and often urged her mamma (even when the roughness of the road did not render it necessary) to get out of the chaise, that she might run up a rising ground, look round her, and pick up and examine a number of different things which caught her eye and struck her fancy ; and Mrs. Cecil, who walked but slowly, was often left far behind, whilst her daughter made little excursions, and amused herself by talking to the country people.

The second day after their departure from home, she told her mamma she had, in one of her rambles into a nar-

row lane, seen a poor boy in great danger of being beaten by a woman who appeared to be mistress of a small cottage adjoining to that at the door of which he stood, and who threatened to lay a stick (which she held in her hand) over his shoulders, if ever he dared to touch her pears again: "But," said Matilda, "the boy insisted that they were not her pears, but his father's, and that he was in his father's garden when he picked them from a bough which hung down almost into his mouth.

Mrs. Cecil observed, that it would indeed have been a hard case if the boy had been punished by a neighbour for eating his father's pears; but when Matilda farther informed her, that the woman said the tree grew in *her* gar-

den, and that the bough with which he had made so free, because it hung over the wall, was a part of it, she said that entirely altered the case ; and asked Matilda, whether, when her sister had lost one of her gloves, and that it was found to have slid into *her* drawer, she thought that accident made it her property, or whether it still belonged to her sister ? or whether, if the little rose-tree, of which she was so fond, should in another year extend its branches so much, as to spread over a corner of her sister's garden, she imagined it would give her a right to pluck all the roses which hung in her way, or whether she should not look upon them as *her* roses, as much as those which were growing on the other parts of it ? Matilda perceived she had been wrong, and

thanked her mamma for shewing her her error.

The travellers arrived towards evening at the foot of a steep craggy hill, and in compassion to the poor horses, they determined to walk to the top of it. On gaining the summit, they saw an extensive common lying before them; and Matilda, who was accustomed to make observations, and to reflect on every thing she saw, and who never lost an opportunity of gaining information, asked her mamma if she did not think it a great pity, that any part of the world should remain so barren and uncultivated, and, as it appeared to her, so intirely useless; wishing, at the same time, she had the power to change the whole common in an instant into

flourishing corn-fields and beautiful gardens.

Mrs. Cecil was just beginning to tell her daughter, that nothing was made which could be said to be entirely useless, when the post-boy came running up to inform her, that one of the wheels of the chaise was broken to pieces, and he did not know what he should do to get it up the hill.

“ This is a sad accident indeed ! ” said Mrs. Cecil, “ and I know not what any of us are to do, for I do not see a single habitation near us.”

“ Bless you ! my lady,” answered the boy, “ do but please to turn about, and you will see plenty of habitations. I be no stranger here ; and though there be no gentlefolks live in the place, I will be answerable for finding you a

clean, neat cottage, with homely fare, but a hearty welcome. The first you see, over there by the trees, belongs to my aunt: do, Madam, please to walk up to it, whilst I go seek for two or three men to help me up with the *chai*."

During this speech, Mrs. Cecil had turned her head, and was very agreeably surprized at seeing, very near the spot where she stood, a little cluster of neat cottages among some trees, which, on ascending the hill, she had not perceived, having been equally struck, as Matilda was, with the extent of the plain before them.

They proceeded, as the post-boy had desired them, to the first cottage, where they found a woman busily employed in preparing her husband's supper, whilst four pretty little children, with ruddy

complexions and smiling faces, were eating milk with wooden spoons out of a large bowl which was placed in the midst of them.

The good woman received them very kindly, and offered them every thing her cottage afforded, such as milk, whey, brown bread, eggs, and some common but ripe and relishing fruit. Matilda expressed much wonder, that she found the means of procuring even the necessaries of life on a bleak, wild common; and was extremely surprised when the woman assured her that the common, which she seemed to think so little of, was what furnished them with the greater part of the comforts they enjoyed: telling her also, that if it were more fertile, and were to be inclosed and cultivated, it would be quite lost.

to them, because they were too poor to be able to rent even the smallest portion of it. "As it is," added she, "all the cottagers on this little spot have a right to feed their cattle, and to cut turf for their winter fire. Neither my cow nor my goats cost me any thing; we have a little garden, which, between my husband and myself, is kept in pretty good order, and produces as many vegetables as we can make use of. I have plenty of poultry, which I carry to market, and have milk to feed my pig; so that we have nothing to wish for, but that God may preserve our health, and continue to us the blessings we enjoy."

Matilda was astonished at this account, and made many observations to her mamma on the pleasure of finding

people happier than she expected, which gave her the greatest satisfaction, as they were convincing proofs of the goodness of her disposition: and she did not fail to observe to her, that the mixture of fertile vallies, barren mountains, hills, woods, and plains, with which the earth is diversified, each in various ways, and at different seasons of the year, are productive of good to the industrious.

Mrs. Cecil and Matilda were obliged to pass the night in the cottage: the next morning the wheel of the chaise being repaired, and having satisfied the good woman for the trouble they had given her, and made some little presents to her children, they continued their journey; and being but a short distance

from a small village, through which lay the high road to London, they arrived at that city without any accident, or meeting with any thing farther, worthy of being related.

THE

STRAWBERRIES.

CONSTANCE, Julia, and Dorothy had obtained their mamma's leave to spend the afternoon with a young lady who lived at the distance of a mile and a half from their house; and as soon as they had dined, their maid being ordered to attend them, they set forward down a shady green lane, and across the fields.

Nothing could be more agreeable and pleasant than the weather, or more beautiful than the way they had to go;

the hedges were full of the sweetest flowers, and the birds sung with more than usual harmony. Susan, the maid, was quite delighted ; she stopped every moment to look around, and admire the beauties which presented themselves to her eyes on every side.

Not so her young ladies : they had each a reason why they could neither enjoy the fragrance of the flowers, the music which echoed from every bush, nor any of the beauties which surrounded them.

Constance was so afraid of the smallest worm which happened to lie in her path, was so terrified at every fly which passed her, that she could enjoy nothing. She walked on, with her eyes bent on the ground, watching each

blade of grass, and stepping with the utmost precaution, expecting every moment to be stung to death, or bit by some dangerous insect.

Julia had passed the whole time of dinner in bewailing the loss of a cold chicken on which she had set her heart; but her dear little pussy having wandered into the pantry in search of a mouse, and being just as fond of cold chicken as her young mistress, and thinking it preferable to the finest mouse (perhaps because it was a greater rarity to her), this ill-bred pussy had dragged it away into a corner, where, if she did not eat it all at one meal, she had leave to finish it the next day.

Julia had lost her dinner: disappointed of her cold chicken, she saw

nothing else on the table (though there were several dishes which the rest of the family commended extremely) which she could possibly eat of. She was too nice to eat any thing common, and had persuaded herself that nothing but delicacies agreed with her: she could not taste either beef or mutton, or ever dine without fish, lamb, or poultry; she hated the winter because there were no vegetables to be had but potatoes, and was delighted when the season came for her to dine on green peas, cauliflower, and asparagus.

The delicate Julia often rose hungry from table; and as this had been the case on the day of their walk, she was sick and uncomfortable, sauntered along, complaining at every step, and, had she not suddenly recollected having a

nice biscuit in her pocket, would probably have been unable to proceed.

Dorothy troubled herself as little as her sisters about the birds or the flowers, the lowing of the cattle, or the fine prospect. Naturally indolent, and hating to move from her place, she was much less inclined to do so after dinner, than at any other time of the day ; for she had no objection to either beef, mutton, or potatoes, and would (if she had been suffered to do so) eat of all three, and as many more different things, as much as would have been sufficient, either of them, for the dinner of any child of her age.

“ Come, Miss Dorothy,” cried Susan, “ do pray walk a little faster. Dear me ! how heavy do you trudge along, with your arms hanging down by your

sides ! Why, you will not take the trouble to lift your feet from the ground —pray look what a dust you raise at every step. Come, take me by the arm —look, what a pretty wood this is we are got into, and—oh dear ! what a quantity of strawberries there are upon that bank. Do you see how beautiful and red they appear among the brambles and dry sticks which lie over them?"

The very idea of something to eat was sure to rouse Dorothy. Constance and Julia also advanced to look at the strawberries ; they were very tempting, and they each wished to taste them, but there were difficulties in the way not likely to be conquered.

Julia's desire for them soon vanished, for she recollect ed that she had neither

cream nor sugar, without which she did not think them eatable.

Dorothy said they were very good without either, and she wished she had a good basket-full, she would soon shew them how well she liked them ; but they could not be got at without removing the brambles and wood, which appeared to have been purposely laid over them, to preserve them till they were ripe ; and Dorothy, after taking away three or four sticks, and a bush or two, began to puff and blow, as if she had been running a race, and declared she could do no more, much as she wished for the strawberries, if it would save her life.

“ How can you be so extremely lazy ? ” exclaimed Constance, eager to get at the tempting fruit. “ You cannot bear

to take the least trouble, Dorothy—come, let me help you; I should be sorry to leave them. What a beautiful scarlet they are, and how finely they smell!—Come, come, let us remove these brambles."

Dorothy had thrown herself upon the grass, declaring she could not stir; and Susan, who was well acquainted with the dispositions of her three young ladies, determined not to interfere.

Constance began very briskly to take away the brambles; but she had scarcely uncovered a few of the strawberries, when a small insect, which she had disturbed, flew out of a bush directly against her, entangled its little wings in her hair, and almost frightened her into fits. She ran to Susan in the most terrible alarm, insisting that a hornet

had got into her hair, and that she should be stung to death in an instant. She prevailed upon her sisters to leave the spot immediately, and nobody could persuade her but that she had disturbed a hornet's nest, and had had a most miraculous escape.

They spent the afternoon with their young friend much in the usual manner; each of them constantly meeting with something or other to disturb them and spoil their pleasure.

Returning in the evening through the wood, they saw a group of little boys and girls sitting under the trees, and eating strawberries; some had their hats full, some held them in their hands, and others in little baskets of their own making.

Susan asked them where they had

gathered so many strawberries. "Why there," answered one of the boys, "where you see the bushes and brambles all in a heap. We covered them up above a week ago, to let them ripen; but I wonder we did not lose them all, for somebody has been here, I am sure, though I suppose they did not see the nice strawberries, or they never would have been such fools as to leave them: but it was well for us that they were so blind."

"And whom did you get to take the trouble to remove all those things for you?" inquired Dorothy, as she hung on Susan's arm with all her weight.

"Lauk-a-day! Miss," said the boy, grinning in her face, "to be sure you be joking. Do you call that trouble?"

Constance said he was very right;

that it certainly could be *no trouble* ; but she really wondered they had not been terrified from attempting to get at the strawberries, when they saw what a number of frightful and dangerous creatures were creeping and flying about them. And now the whole party not only grinned, but laughed aloud ; and Julia told her sisters they had better not make such foolish observations, which only served to make the children laugh at them : that it was ridiculous to suppose they should think it a labour to remove a few brambles, or that they should be so weak as to be afraid of harmless flies and worms ; but she must say, she was a little surprised that they did not go home with their strawberries, and get some cream and sugar to eat with them : no house in the country

was without cream ; there could be no difficulty in getting a bit of sugar, and it would make them so nice, that they would never afterwards relish them alone.

“ That would be very unfortunate,” replied a girl some years older than the others (who only noticed Julia’s speech by redoubled peals of laughter), “ for we should lose many such a treat as we are now enjoying, if we were to take such a foolish whim into our heads. Pray, Miss, do you imagine that my mother keeps a cow, to give us the cream to eat with strawberries ? No ! no ! she sells her butter, and buys us clothes with the money. I wish you could all three spend a month in our cottage, you would learn to be glad enough of having one nicety, without wishing to

add another to it; and to know that those who choose to eat must learn to work, and not call trouble that which is no more than play. You would also perceive, after spending two or three days on your knees in weeding the corn or the garden, that you are in no danger of being either stung or bit by innocent flies or caterpillars, and that till you get rid of all your foolish fancies, you will have no pleasure in any thing in the world, but that all your happiness and comfort will be sacrificed to whim, indolence, and weakness.

THE END.

